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HOW TO MEET INDIA

THE consequences of the Government's unimaginative treatment of India are serious, but the mischief is not yet irreparable. The Working Committee of Congress met on Sunday and decided to call on the eight provincial governments formed by Congress majorities to resign office. But it will not at present embark on any policy of resistance, whether by civil disobedience or by strikes. Its attitude is as yet that it will not support the conduct of the war, but neither will it actively oppose or embarrass the Government in its prosecution. If, as is expected, these Congress ministries lay down office within a week or two in eight of the eleven provinces, India will have registered her protest in a startling and novel way. The Congress gains nothing by this tactic, save a moral demonstration, but that will be impressive, for in some at least of these provinces the Governors, for lack of a workable majority, will have to suspend provincial autonomy and carry on with a bureaucratic apparatus. We should judge that Congress still hopes that wiser counsels may prevail in Downing Street: in that case it would be only too happy to resume negotiations, for with the entire Indian nation it stands wholeheartedly against Nazi ideology and behaviour. The Labour Party in the House is using its power to this end. It cannot press too hard. If we alienate India irreparably we may lose our best friends in America as well, and give to German propaganda its first legitimate weapon for use against us.

As we read the White Paper, the Government failed in this crucial test rather from lack of imagination than from ill-will. It has been our practice to drag India into our wars. The Authorities have not yet realised that India, now half-way to self-government, has a new sense of self-respect, and rightly insists that her consent should be sought before she becomes a belligerent. Lord Linlithgow's excuse for his inability to provide any statement of war-aims that answered India's questions—namely that our allies would have to be consulted first—was weak. Is it too much trouble to consult the French? Again, when Indians ask for a declaration about our future intentions, is it really adequate to repeat the vague promises of former Viceroys and Secretaries of State? Surely in this crisis, with India's friendship at stake, some effort and some thinking was demanded to state our intentions afresh, in a more definite form. To offer a new Round

Table Conference was useless. That procedure, on the last occasion, produced a federal constitution which every major Indian party has rejected. Finally, as an interim concession, to offer to set up a "consultative group" was worse than useless. What Indians demand is not facilities for conversation, but the right to control their own lives.

What, then, might be done? We suggest (1) that a declaration of war-aims, though it cannot yet be detailed, should meet Indians (and for that matter Englishmen) by an undertaking to render our relations with the dependent Empire disinterested and to abolish any vestige of a British economic monopoly, whether by bringing it under the mandate system or otherwise. As an interim measure (2) we would call attention to the plain demand of the Indian Moderates (the Liberals) for "responsible government at the centre now." This could be easily satisfied without legislation now, by changing the personnel of the Viceroy's Council—in plain words by replacing the civil servants who compose it by the responsible leaders of Indian opinion. If Indians can rule a vast province like Bengal without mishap, would they behave with less sanity if they were in control at Delhi? Finally (3) can we not date our vague offer of Dominion Status? We would risk a definite promise that, subject to agreement over transitional arrangements for defence, India shall become a Dominion within a specified period (one year, or two or three) after the end of the war. In the meanwhile the new Indian Viceroy's Council at Delhi should carry on the necessary preliminary work of negotiation and drafting. If anything like these suggestions were adopted we should win India, not merely for this war, but for all time, and in the opinion of the civilised world we should qualify for moral leadership. The Muslim difficulty ought not to deter us. It is now clear that Mr. Jinnah's League opposes federation in principle and has no suggestions for any advance whatever. We must offer the Muslims every reasonable guarantee, but we cannot ask the majority of the Indian people to submit to a negative veto that blots out all hope of progress.

The Turkish Alliance

The signature of the Anglo-French Treaty with Turkey is the most encouraging event on which the Allies have to congratulate themselves since the war started. It removes all ground for anxiety over the Eastern Mediterranean. It also secures the Mosul and Persian oilfields, and may have a salutary influence on Iran and Afghanistan. We doubt whether the Duce has any lingering inclination to enter the war, but if he had, the knowledge that the Turks would come in against him would help to deter him. It is not a matter for regret that Turkey stipulates for the maintenance of her good relations with Russia, and will take no belligerent action that might result in war between Russia and herself. But it narrows the scope of her support for our guarantee to Rumania. She would defend Rumania against a German attack, but not against Russia, if that Power were to march, as she well may do, to recover Bessarabia. Turkish friendship for Russia is in our view an asset which we would do well to encourage, and even to use as an avenue of approach to Moscow.

Russia's American Prize

The case of the "City of Flint" makes an interesting problem for lawyers, but it ought not to lead to diplomatic complications. This American ship, carrying to a British port a mixed cargo of 4,000 tons of tractors, grain, fruit, hides and wax, was captured and navigated by a German prize-crew of 18 men to the Russian arctic port of Kola Bay. The Germans may have imagined that Russia would behave like an ally, but in fact she has so far carried out her duties as a neutral correctly by interning the German prize-crew. Rumour, however, says they have since been released. Her next step should be to release the American ship and all who may have been aboard her. There is a decisive precedent. Early in 1914 the Germans captured the British ship "Appam" and took her into Newport News. After elaborate argument in a hierarchy of American Courts, the decision was that the prize-crew must be interned and the ship released. This American verdict won general acceptance and the U.S.S.R. would do well to follow it.

Russia's Neutrality

Two items of news throw light this week on Russia's benevolent neutrality towards Germany. She has made an agreement with the Nazi Government to supply 1,000,000 tons of wheat and fodder, and to deliver these supplies within two months. On the other hand, M. de Kerillis, an able and responsible French journalist of the Right, states that Stalin has just flatly rejected a request from Hitler to supply 2,000 planes for operations on the Western Front. He adds that while Russia will sell supplies on a large scale to Germany, she is equally ready to trade with the Allies. In spite of the high reputation of M. de Kerillis, all news of this kind must be received with caution. But we are convinced (1) that Stalin is not yet prepared to become a belligerent on the German side; (2) that he will supply Germany with foodstuffs on a large scale; or (3) that he is ready to trade with us. It is probable that, save in fats, our food blockade will be frustrated. It can be effective certainly as to rubber, and in some degree as to oil. The Russian wireless has announced that a general reorganisation has been undertaken (a) of the Russian railways and (b) of the oil industry, this latter under M. Kaganovitch. It was even stated that synthetic plant is to be installed in the Donetz coalfield. The inference is that there are limits to any additional output of natural oil, but the synthetic product cannot be available for a considerable time. The moral is that no pains should be spared and no time lost in coming to terms with this opportunist neutral. In order to soothe Moscow's wounded *amour propre* we would again urge the despatch of distinguished and sympathetic political envoys—it is worse than useless to send officials—as well as a trade mission to buy up all available Russian supplies.

The Scandinavian Trade Problem

Meanwhile the Nazis are attempting a counter-blockade by a continental boycott of Britain on the Napoleonic model. We do not yet know the exact demands which Germany is making upon the Scandinavian countries for a boycott of trade with Great Britain and for linking their economies with that of Germany. They are, however, definitely demanding that Scandinavian vessels shall proceed from the Baltic only by way of the Kiel Canal, where they can be conveniently searched, and are threatening to sink at sight any vessels which accept British

convoys. It seems clear that they are also endeavouring to divert to Germany the largest possible quantity of Scandinavian exports. The closing of the Baltic, to the extent to which it can be done, must, of course, give increased importance to the Norwegian sea-ports on the Atlantic, such as Bergen, Trondjem and Narvik, and to the railway lines connecting them with Sweden. But sending exports on a large scale by these routes is bound to be costly, even apart from the physical difficulties; and the Scandinavian States are not at all in an easy position. Sweden's iron ore is, of course, of especial importance to the Nazis; and Finland and Sweden can also send appreciable quantities of foodstuffs, including fats. For Great Britain the most serious loss if Scandinavian trade were cut off would be timber; but this is partly covered by the recent agreement with the Soviet Union. One great doubt is whether Germany can send exports to pay for the large quantities of produce which she is apparently demanding, and at the same time pay for the Soviet supplies which she has already agreed to take.

The Neutrality Debate in the Senate

The parties in the United States Senate having reached agreement to limit the debate over the Neutrality Bill, a decision seems likely during the next few days. The common expectation is that the Bill will pass in a form which will include both the "cash and carry" provision, and the removal of the arms embargo but not the provision for the granting of short-term credits. The struggle will then be transferred to the House of Representatives, where it is likely to be a good deal more bitter than it has been in the Senate, and where much wilder words are likely to be flung about. Nevertheless, the Bill should become law, even if its form undergoes some modifications, and there has to be a last-hour contest between the Senate and the House over the exact provisions. It is so obvious that the Neutrality Act, as it now stands, strongly favours Germany that only the extreme isolationists are willing to go the whole way in its defence, and some of Mr. Roosevelt's strongest Republican enemies find themselves on this issue in his camp.

The Vicious Spiral

Wage advances to meet the increased cost of living have been under discussion in a number of industries during the present week. The railway Unions have been considering what to do about the Tribunal's revised proposals, which go some way towards meeting the claims of the N.U.R., but concede very little to the members of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers. The Miners' Federation has been meeting to determine its attitude to the proposed national advance of 8*d.* a shift, with a promise of revision at the end of the year in the light of the December cost of living figures. Apart from the amount, this advance concedes "for the duration" the miners' claim, so long rejected by the owners, that wages ought to be determined basically by national instead of local bargaining. The cotton operatives have secured advances in both the spinning and the manufacturing sections; and several other big groups have either received advances or are in process of negotiating for them on a national scale. In effect, the general upward movement of wages has already begun, as it was bound to do in view of the sharp rise in the cost of living during September and the continuance of this rise during the present month. Clearly, the danger of a vicious spiral of wages and prices is serious; and the only way of preventing it is to tighten the control of prices at every stage, and to extend control to those goods which have so far been left outside its scope. Something much more effective than Mr. Stanley's anti-profiteering bill will be needed if this is to be achieved.

The Muddle Over Requisitioning

The cries of anger and distress against the Government's methods of commandeering buildings have risen steadily ever since the war began. The hotel-keepers, at first the most articulate section among the victims, have been reinforced increasingly by those responsible for schools and universities, and by more private sufferers. In the light of all the information now available, it is impossible to doubt that the methods used by the Office of Works have been not merely inconsiderate, but downright silly and incompetent almost beyond belief. The official defence—that the war as it actually is has been very different from the war that was expected—is no defence at all; for the persons who were bundled at a few hours' notice out of hotels, schools and colleges which have been empty ever since could at any rate have been left in possession and bundled out at the same notice when their premises were actually required. It is very possible that, save on the score of weakness, the Office of Works is not the real villain of the piece, and that the ultimate blame lies mainly with other departments, which requisitioned well ahead all the space they could possibly want even if all London were laid in ruins. But there should have been someone in the Office of Works and in the Cabinet to stand up to these idiocies. Apart from the unnecessary losses inflicted on the victims, the entire episode is an excellent illustration of the lack of any central planning of wartime operations on the civilian front.

Civilian Compensation

The Government had another bad day when compensation for civilian casualties came under debate in the House of Commons on Tuesday, and the Labour Party's motion for the substitution of a more favourable scheme was only beaten by 137 votes to 113, after a number of Government members had joined in attacking the official proposals. One particularly objectionable feature of the plan is that, as in the case of separation allowances, the Government is attempting to discriminate against large families. Another, no less objectionable, is that no compensation at all is provided for housewives or for other persons who are not normally "in gainful employment." The Minister of Pensions, in his reply, could only plead that the cost of satisfying the demands made might be very high, and that the Government was not to be regarded as having said its last word. There were the usual references to the need for waiting until the end of the war, and then seeing how much the country felt able to afford. But how can the households of civilian, any more than of military, war victims afford to wait till the war is over? On this matter, as well as on the whole question of children's allowances, the Government needs to think again, and must be compelled quickly to announce a greatly revised decision.

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CANDID THOUGHTS ON THE SITUATION

PERHAPS the most important single fact in the world is that all the Great Powers fear the destruction and revolution that will result from totalitarian warfare. Once the U.S.S.R. had given up its possible alliance with the Western democracies in favour of co-operation with Germany Hitler could risk the bombing of helpless and isolated Poland. So far sanity has kept him and us from letting hell loose in Western Europe. The war in the West is, so far, little more than a mutual blockade. Whether the Nazi mentality can long maintain a defensive war, such as Britain and France envisage, we have yet to see. Herr Von Ribbentrop's violent speech may herald a change. Or it may not. Hitler is a cautious and crafty enemy and his air-marshals and generals may not wish to risk a boomerang throw. There is at least a chance of a further period of prudence, of manoeuvres to the accompaniment of mainly economic hostilities. If so, what can we still do to avoid the immeasurable catastrophe of unlimited war?

Hitler plans a Continental blockade not unlike that which Napoleon failed to establish. The Scandinavian countries will try to resist his pressure; but we cannot be sure that they will succeed. If Hitler prevails on them, he will cause Britain inconvenience, but no crippling injury. He will also improve his own position in the matter of fats and other necessary articles. How far his agreement with Russia goes is still unknown. The evidence is discussed in detail elsewhere in this issue. Certainly it means that a British blockade cannot have an effect comparable with that of the last war. On the other hand, Germany's U-Boat campaign against Britain appears to be well under control and her blockade of us, even when her full resources are used in the air, is likely to be equally indecisive. The prospect is a stalemate, not only on the battlefield but also on the economic front.

Our chief hopes have lain in some type of revolution in Germany. Here, everything is guesswork. At the moment Hitler stands as the conqueror of Poland and all the resources of propaganda are poured forth to prove to the German people that in the West Britain and France are the aggressors. Our counter propaganda is still ineffectively organised. The leaflets that have been dropped were not well conceived or even written in good German. They have emanated not from the many experts on German psychology who are available in this country, but from the Air Ministry, whose proper job was not to draft them, but to scatter them. As might have been expected they did the latter admirably and the former deplorably. Though there is apparently trouble in the German army, we cannot rely on the soldiers turning against Hitler. Some of them dislike the advance of the U.S.S.R. on ideological as well as strategical grounds. Others who have always been friendly with the Red Army see in the new Russian Alliance the basis for conquest in the West and may even favour attacks on industrialists, whom they regard as a survival from the period before National Socialism.

If we wish to appeal to the German people we must do so far more intelligently. Opinion in Germany, though superficially united, is fundamentally divided. The same propaganda is not good for the Catholic South and for the Protestant North. Propaganda that goes in the Rhineland is not necessarily good in Berlin. Further, when we are trying to influence German opinion as a whole, it is above all important to get rid of people who think or talk in terms of breaking up Germany after the war. Yet the French show so little understanding of the psychology of their enemies that a peace that would out-Versailles Versailles is talked about in France and even broadcast as propaganda to Germany. A recent wireless talk from Fécamp put over in bad German by the French authorities might have been propaganda by Dr. Goebbels. It talked of the restoration of the Hapsburgs and of the re-establishment of the old monarchies of pre-Imperial Germany. Nothing could be better calculated to unite the German people behind the Führer. The truth is, and we had better say it bluntly, that the French and British Governments are as hostile to the revolutionary forces that may be released in Germany by the war as they are to Hitler himself. The prospect of a popular rising, which might be the salvation of Europe, is utterly repugnant to them. They know better than to quarrel with Stalin. They admit that Stalin's advances are not in any way comparable with Hitler's aggression, that Russia has in fact done us a service in Poland and carefully withdrawn to the Curzon line once planned by Britain as the boundary of Poland. They are willing, terribly late and for reasons of necessity, to come to an agreement with the Soviet Union. They have made a trade agreement which is, in its small way, a good sign. But Mr. Lloyd George was certainly right in his speech at Carnarvon when he urged that much more should be done. A Minister of the first rank should be sent to Moscow to make the best terms he can.

Surveying this situation, we are confident that Britain and France can withstand attack, but not that they can win "victory" in the old sense of the term. Nor have they governments capable of convincing us or the neutral world that they could build a system of peace and prosperity, supposing they had actually achieved a military victory. Obviously, friendship with America is of the first importance, but we have allowed German propaganda of every sort to drive British news off the front pages of the newspapers in the United States as well as of the other neutral countries. The Government has dealt a smashing blow to the democratic cause by an imperialist reply to the dignified appeal of the Indian Congress. They have answered Hitler's speech with a negative unlikely to appeal either to Germany or to the neutrals. Mr. Chamberlain has spoken of a new world for which the common people everywhere are praying, but he has given no idea of what this new world should be.

The only statesman, and he unfortunately is an elder statesman, who frankly faces the facts in Britain to-day is Mr. Lloyd George. His speech last week was forcible and sensible; it was not fully or fairly reported in any paper we have seen except the *Manchester Guardian*. It is not enough to reply to Mr. Lloyd George that Hitler is a perjured villain (which he is) nor to shout that a proposal of a conference on terms is a sign of pusillanimity or a preparation for a second Munich. On the contrary it is plain commonsense. Hitler's proposals were inacceptable. Agreed. But they left plenty of handles for us to seize. Why should we leave Hitler with the diplomatic initiative? We are in a strong position to take

it. Hitler's advance is cut off in the East and West. If we can associate Mr. Roosevelt in a demand for a conference—and we can never do that until we put forward positive proposals—we might transform the situation before it is too late. We all know what will happen if the present lull in the war is allowed to pass. At some point the belligerents will grow desperate and begin using all their engines of destruction from explosives to poison gas. Then, indeed, it will be difficult to continue any rational discussion. Then, indeed, we may reach the point when there are no war aims except mutual destruction. There may be still time to-day to save the world from a limitless catastrophe if Britain can leave off thinking in terms of imperial victory, and make a bid for leadership of the democratic caus e all over the world.

RUSSIA'S HELP TO GERMANY

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN THE U.S.S.R.]

To live, and particularly to wage war, Germany needs a great many products and commodities which she does not produce herself—rubber, oil, wheat, iron, manganese, etc. The blockade is cutting off most of Germany's import of these things, and as such is the most powerful weapon at the disposal of England and France with which to strike at Germany. The whole strategy of the war is based on strangling Germany with the blockade. But what if Russia should break the blockade by giving Germany the necessary materials to fight for years?

Just before the outbreak of the war Germany and Russia signed a commercial pact which provided for delivery by the Soviet Union to Germany of 180,000,000 marks' worth of goods during the first two years after the signing of the pact. This was not very disturbing; this sum hardly amounts to a month's normal German import.

On September 25th, however, a new development aroused serious misgivings about Russian help. In a letter to Ribbenthrop, when the German-Soviet friendship pact was signed, Commissar Molotov stated that it was the intention of both countries to organise their economic and industrial plans in such a way as to increase the volume of Soviet-German trade to the highest point reached in the past. In 1931 Soviet-German trade was 1,100,000,000 marks. If they bring trade volume up to this level again, it will mean about twelve times as much as that provided for by the trade pact of August, and a volume large enough to be of the greatest importance to Germany in waging the war. Molotov's letter further stated that the Soviet Union would deliver raw materials to Germany, in return for *promises* to deliver machinery and manufactured goods.

It began to look as though Russia were really going to throw the weight of its resources on Germany's side. A commission of German experts and economists headed by Doctor Schnurre left for Moscow, and German specialists, engineers and efficiency men began to show up in the Metropole Hotel in Moscow by the dozen. There was talk of German oil men going to Galicia to increase oil production in the Soviet Union's newly acquired oil field.

Then the question arose: granted the Soviet Union's desire to help Germany, for the present at least, how much can she give? Foreigners living in Moscow know that there are long lines of people on the streets every day waiting to buy shoes, kerosine, cloth, finished clothes, and often for such foods as milk, meat, vodka. We know that there is the greatest difficulty in obtaining good quality gasoline, and that tyres are almost unobtainable in the open market. Further, the country is working out its third five-year plan, which calls for considerable construction, and the expansion of production in almost every branch of industry and agriculture. These projects will consume all that the Soviet Union can produce in the way of raw materials. Will the Russians scrap their third five-year plan, in order to support Germany?

Some foreigners in Moscow are of the opinion that even if they want to help Germany by breaking the British blockade, they cannot do it because the people would not stand being squeezed down to a lower standard of living. In my opinion this is an incorrect analysis of the situation. I was in half a dozen Russian cities during the winter of 1932–33, when the Government was squeezing very hard in order to reinvest about 56 per cent. of the national income in heavy industry. The people were hungry. For months on end they had only black bread, and sometimes the supply of that failed for several days at a time. They exported bread and butter to buy machines on an enormous scale, and the people went hungry, but went right on working. There was no serious difficulty of a political nature, and what opposition there was seems to have been among the intellectuals, or even among the leading functionaries of the Government and the Party. They did it in 1932, and if they choose they can do it now.

A much more serious question follows: How much is Russian industry and transport capable of exporting to Germany? In the first place everything that was previously exported to France and England can now be sent to Germany. There is no difficulty here, as commercial relations between Russia and England and France have dropped to a very low point. Since the outbreak of war nearly a dozen boats scheduled to sail to England have been held up in Murmansk, ostensibly awaiting payment in dollars. Their principal cargoes were wood pulp and oil products. Soviet export by rail has naturally almost stopped, except small shipments of manufactured goods to the Baltic countries. If one adds up the total Soviet exports to the British Empire, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, France, Austria for the first nine months of 1938 (there are no official figures available for later than September, 1938) one gets an exportable total as follows:

FOODS		RAW MATERIALS	
	(Thousands of Tons)		
Wheat	150–200	Petroleum prod.	1,000–2,000
Rye	50–90	Manganese ores	200–300
Meat	200	Magnesite ores	200
Canned foods	20	Cotton	10–20
Sugar	25–30	Anthracite	300–400
Dried vegetables	20–50	Iron	100
		Wood and wood pulp	abt. 3,000

These goods, if delivered to Germany, as they may well be, while far from solving all her problems, will be of great importance.

In addition to these normal exports, the Soviet Union will unquestionably be able, given the desire, to increase exports of a number of products.

All the ores, for instance, are available in much larger quantities than is normally exported. The iron mines of Magnitogorsk and Krivoi Rog have been operating at less than maximum capacity for some two years already, because they were not in a position to transport and smelt all the ore which could have been mined. The situation with manganese ore is similar. The oil production of the Soviet Union is something like 30 million tons a year. It is true that this is barely sufficient for the needs of the country; but, if they choose, the authorities could make their people walk instead of riding, and greatly increase the export of petroleum to Germany.

Then German specialists may succeed in increasing production in Soviet industry, making it possible further to increase exports to Germany. In my opinion this is not a very important consideration. In the first place, the Germans need their technicians at home. In the second place, I doubt if even a large number of German specialists could have much effect on Russian industrial production, for at least a couple of years. The production problems of the Soviet Union are far from simple, and the difficulties for foreigners since the purge and concurrent anti-foreigner propaganda are such that it is almost impossible for them to use their knowledge and

experience effectively. In the third place, Russia is short of labour power. They complain already that they need three million new industrial workers. I am inclined to disregard the possibility that German specialists will come in and bring about substantial increases in Soviet industrial production.

Then there is the question of re-export. The Soviet Union can buy oil products and resell them to Germany. Concretely they import some 200,000 tons from the United States every year, of which a large part is high-test gasoline; there is no way of telling how much of this goes to Germany already. The Soviet Union has gold; and if she wants to, she can buy anything she wants in the U.S.A., pay cash in gold, and send it to Germany. This, of course, depends on the United States being prepared to send unlimited supplies and on the effectiveness of the British rationing system.

Transport is the most serious difficulty. Poland's railroads were badly damaged by the war. Besides, the gauge of the rails is narrower than that in Russia, trans-shipping at the old Soviet-Polish border is a difficult business. Besides, the railroad system of the Soviet Union has long been, and still is, one of the bottlenecks of the national economy. It would be very difficult to ship to Germany by rail all the products normally exported to other countries, largely by sea, and mostly in foreign ships. On the other hand, there is the possibility of shipping to Germany by water from Port Tallin or Libau which have fallen into Russia's lap, to Danzig or Stettin. This possibility is probably being seriously considered; one of the members of Schnurre's commission is an official of the North German Lloyd. It is also interesting to note that the main east-west railroad lines in the Baltic countries are Russian gauge, so that freight can be shipped through to the new Baltic ports without trans-shipment.

Summarising all these factors, my view is that the U.S.S.R. will be able to furnish sufficient quantities of produce—particularly those most necessary to Germany, such as iron ore, bauxite, wheat, and meat—to be of tremendous importance to Hitler.

And, paradoxical as it may seem, I think the U.S.S.R. will keep on giving Germany what she needs until the German war machine is too badly damaged in the war with France and Britain to be a potential danger to Russia. In other words, Russia is paying Germany to fight, to keep the war going. The ultimate aim of this, from the Bolshevik point of view, is a destruction of Western Europe, subsequent disintegration, and then revolution helped on by the bayonets of the Red Army, which by that time would be fresh, well supplied, and by far the strongest force in Europe.

A LONDON DIARY

IN spite of the muddles and frequent foolishness of the bureaucracy, there have been many things in this country to admire since the war began. Parliament has been constructive, critical and, for the most part, sensible. Some of the press has gone wild and begun a sort of Hun-hating campaign but the public shows no signs of reacting as it did in the last war. People are too conscious of the craziness of war and politically they are much better educated than they were twenty-five years ago. They remain obstinately tolerant and determined to think. Then the nation's treatment of aliens has been much better than last time in more difficult circumstances, while conscientious objectors have, at least until recently, been given a very much fairer hearing before the tribunals. No doubt the reason for this is partly that fewer men are wanted on active service and that the proportion of infantry to trained technicians in the army has now become much smaller. It is realised that a man who has strong objections to fighting had much better be put to some alternative service than be made into a bad soldier at the front. Unfortunately, there seems lately to have been a change for the worse in some of the tribunals, whose job is simply to inquire into the sincerity of the man before them, not to show off their superior dialectical skill. They should remember that religious faith is not the only valid basis for objection. I want to put in a plea urged upon me in very responsible quarters that the authorities should ask for more volunteers before more very young men are put into khaki. I am sure volunteers would be obtained and that a selection of the rather older categories would make for efficiency. I suppose the difficulties are that they would also be more expensive because they would be more likely to have dependants, and that it would be hard to sort them out in view of the complicated provisions about reserved occupations.

* * *

The churches are, I think, behaving much more sensibly in this war than they did in the last. To me Christianity seems a pacifist religion; I have never been able to see the sense of telling people to love their enemies in time of peace if you are going to encourage them to bayonet an enemy directly one turns up. But granted that most clergy do not so interpret the New Testament, I am glad to notice that more of them are far more independent (the Bishop of Chichester is a notable example) and less the servants of popular feeling than they were in 1914. Archbishop Temple, of course, is a fervent supporter of the war, but his pronouncements are constructive and his remarks about war aims and Federal Union have done more to put the idea over than any number of leading articles could have done. Contrast his attitude with that of the German church. I notice that the German Evangelical Church on the first of October united in a thanksgiving for the conquest of Poland. I am afraid it is true that the German Evangelicals, who have praised the courage of Pastor Niemöller and others who have resisted them, quarrelled with the Nazi regime rather on matters of church control and doctrine than on questions of foreign policy. They seem to have forgotten about "Godless Russia." The Spiritual Council of the German Evangelical Church says, amongst other things:

> In deep humility and gratitude we bow to-day at our Harvest Thanksgiving, before the goodness and bounty of our God. Once again He has blessed meadows and pastures and . . . fulfilled His promise to us that He would give us food in due season. But the God who watches over the destinies of nations has this year blessed us German people with another harvest, no less rich. As the army reports of the last few days can confirm with pride, the fighting on the battlefields of Poland is ending; our German brothers and sisters in Poland are freed from all fears and oppressions of body and soul, which they have had to endure for years, and more especially during these last months. How could we be grateful enough to God for this!

Nauseating. And let us not also invent a Tribal God to bless our arms.

* * *

The sharp speech made in Tokyo by Mr. Grew, the American Ambassador, the other day was clearly not an indiscretion but a bit of calculated diplomacy. When he said flatly that the American democracy resented Japan's treatment of American interests in China and condemned the whole policy of conquest, he was, I think, playing on the feud that now rages between the Japanese Foreign Office and the Army. The diplomatic and consular services which recently went on strike, are fighting, first, for their lives and, secondly for a saner policy, against the soldiers, who have virtually taken over all their functions. There is little doubt that America is prepared to use as a strong bargaining counter the trade treaty which Washington denounced. It expires next January. Mr. Grew, before he renews it, will certainly insist on better behaviour towards American nationals and interests. Will he also try to do something for China? If so, we wish we were sure that he could count on British co-operation; Britain must not weaken over the Chinese silver deposits in Tientsin, or over our determination to keep the "back door" through Burmah open for China's use. On the military side China is doing well: the Japanese suffered a heavy reverse in their attempt to open the Canton-Hankow route—and this has been their only big offensive operation this season.

Among the private organisations which are not blacked-out by the war are the Fabian Society and the Union of Democratic Control. The latter is, I believe, comtemplating a regular "news-letter," containing extracts from the foreign press; it is already receiving a large response to a leaflet on war aims based on the now increasingly popular idea of Federation. The realisation that the League collapsed because it was only a loose association without any central authority and that we shall never get peaceful co-operation without the abolition of sovereignty and a United States of Europe has now penetrated the minds of most thoughtful people. Incidentally, Federal Union, which accepted as its basis Clarence Streit's proposals for a Federation of Western Europe with the United States put forward in *Union Now*, runs a small weekly news-sheet, called *Federal Union News* (89 MacDonald Street, Birmingham, 10*s.* for the year). The Fabian Society has published a very useful pamphlet by Mr. G. D. H. Cole, called *The War on the Home Front*. It discusses the economic side of war preparation and also urges the importance of maintaining free speech and free institutions. Most of all, I think, the Fabian Society is to be congratulated on maintaining its well-known series of autumn lectures. The lectures are being given in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, at 2.15 on Saturday afternoons. The first was by H. J. Laski. The other lecturers are R. H. S. Crossman (Oct. 28) and then on successive Saturdays, Hamilton Fyfe, Leonard Barnes, G. D. H. Cole, and K. Zilliacus. Laski discussed Cabinet organisation in wartime and he made an important point about the idea of an economic staff. It is generally agreed that it is absurd for people like Sir William Beveridge, Sir Arthur Salter, and other economists with great administrative experience to be excluded from the machinery of government. But Laski's point was that they ought to be brought right into the administrative machine: otherwise they would not have access to the day-by-day departmental papers, and would always be obstructed by the routine officials. He urges that they should have top civil service appointments and be responsible to a Minister of Economic Planning (or whatever you like to call it) who should be in the War Cabinet.

* * *

I can see that local authorities are in a difficulty about reopening schools without adequate A.R.P. as long as education is compulsory. But what in heaven's name induced the Board of Education to send out a circular approving the opening of Evening Institutes only when adequate A.R.P. facilities are readily available? Attendance at these Institutes is voluntary and most of the students are old enough to take a risk. As a result of this circular Sheffield, to take one instance, is shutting down further education. Apparently, although it is not dangerous for an English citizen to take his wife and family to a cinema or a theatre, even when there are no shelters in the vicinity, it *is* dangerous to go to a night-class. But even this is not quite true. As long as the night-class is not under the Board or the local authority, it is not dangerous—witness the W.E.A. classes all over the country. This is why Birkbeck College, which was the first part of London University to decide on reopening, has been able to announce that it will hold evening courses.

* * *

The London School of Economics, I am glad to see, is also resuming its evening teaching in London on October 30th, while continuing its day teaching at Cambridge. It is obviously desirable that University teaching should be restored in London as soon and as fully as possible, along with teaching in schools and evening institutes. Even if there is a second evacuation of London, there will still be a population in need of education. To convert the capital into an intellectual desert and call the process civil defence is hardly appropriate for a country that is avowedly fighting for liberal principles. There is plenty for the Universities to do. It is not merely a question of training specialists, important though that is. Their job is also to maintain centres of free discussion and independent research.

My reference the other day to short-wave news bulletins brought me so many queries that I think I ought to make clear at once that I am no expert and cannot recommend sets. I went into a cut-price shop accompanied by an expert friend; if you want to buy sets at or about the price I mentioned you must go to one of those shops, but to go without an expert adviser is the equivalent of jumping into the tiger-pit at Whipsnade. When you have got your set you must remember two things. The first is that on all reasonably priced sets fading on distant stations is unavoidable. Nothing on earth will prevent the station which has been coming in at full strength dwindling to a whisper without warning, and then coming back again. I have found American stations in particular have a steady up-and-down which makes it quite impossible to listen, for example, to music on them. The second is that tuning is "hair fine." You must have a steady and delicate hand; on these wavelengths you can lose a station completely by a movement of the needle so faint you cannot see it. Remember, too, that if your eye is not on the exact level of the dial you will see the needle-point maybe one-sixty-fourth of an inch out, which is quite enough to make you decide the station you are searching for is not coming through to-night. You will have, too, to "log" stations as you get them, as one did in the old days of wireless. The old lists of stations are of very little use—British and German propaganda stations are bursting through and bellowing on all sorts of wavelengths, and I have found no up-to-date list whatever. The B.B.C. official paper doesn't publish one at all.

* * *

A correspondent sends me the following, *To a Balloon Barrage*.

Oh, wires invisible, we hail thee,
Prove, if Nazis come one day,
That this at least is not another
Chamberlain *ballon d'essai*.

* * *

Anyone familiar with the usual architecture of our Public Schools must consider that their compulsory exile in the Stately Homes has its consolations. Malvern, for instance, has long enjoyed a Spartan reputation for rigorous athleticism, to which the dourness of its Victorian Gothic is well adapted. Is not the character of the school liable to be dangerously relaxed by the baroque exuberance of Blenheim? Every effort, however, is being made by the exiled schools to keep their *esprit de corps* undiluted. Thus we learn from the *Times* that Cheltenham has been billeted upon Shrewsbury, but the boys of the two schools—such has been the ingenuity of the arrangements—hardly catch a glimpse of each other. In most Public Schools boys are severely discouraged from making friends with their contemporaries in other houses. I can understand the alarm of schoolmasters at the possibility of their charges getting to know bounders from another school, however Public.

CRITIC

WARTIME FARMING AND AFTER—II

HISTORY seldom repeats itself, and although it seems inevitable that there must be some rise in prices, on account of higher shipping freights and insurance, depreciated exchange and other causes, there is no sign yet of food prices in this war rocketing to the dizzy spirals of 1914-18. Some farmers then made a great deal of money; others lost most of their gains in the succeeding years when prices ran ahead of costs in the downward plunge that initiated ten years of agricultural depression. High taxation to pay for the war had impoverished many landowners who could thus no longer play their part as partners in the industry; many farmers had learnt extravagant habits from the fat years; home-grown food had become impossibly expensive, driving people to purchase readily imported food; and in the general pricking of the bubble of inflation, British agriculture lost all the ground gained in the war and more besides.

It is to the credit of farmers that they have remembered the headache that followed the brief span of hectic profiteering. This war finds by far the greater majority of them ready to accept price control, provided that it really keeps prices and costs in step. If prices can be kept down, agriculture will find itself at the end of the war in a very strong jumping-off position for its peacetime development. After 1918, the edge of the farmers' appeal to townsmen not to forget their old friend who had come to their rescue when the U-boats threatened them was considerably dulled by the knowledge that their old friend had then made an exceedingly good thing out of his patriotism, whether he liked it or not. Farmers this time, it is to be hoped, will be able to base their claims on far better grounds. For if the war lasts long enough, the chances are that we shall be left with a Britain much more fertile, better farmed and better organised for efficient food production, and it will be difficult to put a spanner in one part of the works without seriously upsetting the whole outfit.

This fact needs explanation. It arises from the increased knowledge we have gained about grass and grassland in the last ten years, knowledge for which we chiefly have to thank Sir George Stapledon. Sir George has led the way in breeding grasses and perfecting grass mixtures that will give us as good pasture in twelve months as we could once only obtain in almost as many years. Moreover the assemblage of different grasses in the new pasture and their proportions to one another are able to bring about a very considerable increase in their stock-carrying capacity. It has also been shown that the way to keep the land healthy and fertile and to obtain pasture of this quality is to plough it up at recurring intervals, take a fodder crop and a corn crop or two, then grass it down again. In some cases this ploughing up may take place every three or four years; in others every five or six; and on some land as much as fifteen or twenty years may elapse before it is desirable to disturb the sward. But the net effect of this would be to turn Britain back again into a country of arable farming, where we grow more corn and animal fodder. On the really poor land, particularly in parts of Wales, even greater miracles than doubling the productive capacity of our pastures have been worked. Where there was barely enough soil for ploughs with caterpillar tractors to scratch a seed bed, a crop such as rape and rye grass has somehow been induced to grow. Animals have been fed over it, and with the help of their dung and urine and the small amount of humus created by the crop, another plough-up in a year or two's time has made it possible to sow and grow quite a presentable pasture where nothing of the sort has ever grown in the history of mankind. I have seen rough grazings not quite so bad as this but worth, say, two shillings and sixpence rent per acre converted into pasture that will keep a bullock to the acre or half a dozen sheep, lettable at twenty-five or thirty shillings per acre.

The primary purpose of this method of farming is livestock production, the kind of farming for which Britain is best suited. The plough is the producer of good grass and fertile, healthy land. But the important implication to be noted is the fact that the farmer must somehow be able to cover his costs of growing intermittent corn and fodder crops if this kind of farming is to be followed. It is claimed that we could probably double the stock-carrying capacity of our 15 million acres of permanent grass if we treated it in this way, and that would mean cheaper production of livestock. But no conceivable economies in livestock or corn production would permit wheat to be sold at 20*s*. per quarter or oats at 12*s*. per quarter without involving the average efficient farmer in very considerable loss. Moreover it is obviously no less important that the farmer should be able to run his production plant, so to speak, to the full and produce this very great increase of livestock. If he grows the grass, he must have the stock to eat it, or not only is the feed wasted, but also the pasture will deteriorate; just as in any other business, reduction in sales will very quickly weight down overhead charges so that the whole enterprise begins to run at a loss instead of at a profit.

For these reasons it is quite evident that you cannot interfere with one aspect of this kind of farming without upsetting the whole. You cannot say, you must grow less corn or produce less beef without making the general system hopelessly uneconomic. It would be like telling the owner of a motor-car factory that he must produce to the full only every other week and once a year make lorries for a month instead of motor-cars.

Thousands of acres of dung-sodden pasture are now being ploughed up under the stress of war. Many of them ought to have been ploughed long ago, for the stored up fertility in them can only be released when the plough has turned them over and cultivator and harrow have thoroughly broken up the sod and buried it. Then fertility is set free, together with the nitrogens bequeathed by the clovers, to nourish the coming crop of wheat or oats. But no one yet has devised a system of arable farming in which corn can be economically omitted, although now we have found that the system of arable farming just described, known as "ley farming," is the one that will keep the most livestock and grow the best pasture over the larger proportion of our country.

The effect of the present conditions is to accelerate the turning over of our country to this type of farming that has already gone a long way towards making the old dispute of "Corn *versus* Livestock" almost meaningless. The difference now is that counties are ploughing up their thousands of acres where previously they were only ploughing up in tens of acres. As yet we have barely started, for the whole of the 250,000 acres so far obtained by the Government's £2 per acre plough up subsidy barely amounts to 1 per cent. of our land in permanent grass and grazings. At the present time we are putting the newly ploughed land to wheat or potatoes or fodder crops on account of the special needs of wartime, but eventually it will have to go back to grass for a time and it will be more productive grass. As ley farming spreads, our output of livestock and its products will increase. If only half of our grassland doubles its stock-carrying capacity, immense problems will ensue in a country that already produces nearly half of its food requirements and carries a population of 6,750,000 cattle, 18,000,000 sheep, 3,500,000 pigs and 53,000,000 poultry. It will not be easy, when the war is over, to tell our farmers that their increased produce, obtained very largely by improved and efficient farming, is no longer wanted, especially since that would mean, more than it ever has before, throwing the whole farming machine out of gear. But, equally, will it be easy to tell the Dominions, who have supported us in the war, but whose eyes are riveted in time of peace on the English market for their agricultural goods, that they must accept a smaller share of the English market? Or to tell industry, anxious to build up again its export trade, that less imported food must come back in payment? Or to tell the City, its sinews strained with the effort of war, that it must look somewhere other than to imported food for payment of its interest on loans lent to countries overseas?

None of it is going to be easy, but one important thing must be remembered. If there is to be a satisfactory end to this war, it will be an end that brings an all-round settlement, including the economic front. Although a return to complete Free Trade is improbable and almost certainly unworkable under modern conditions, yet there will surely be a lessening of trade barriers and goods will flow round the world more freely. There will also be, one profoundly hopes, reconstruction of the distressed areas in Central Europe that Hitler has beggared with war and preparations for war and the great need of the peoples there will be butter instead of guns. Britain should no longer have to take so large a proportion of the world's food exports or run the risk of upsetting her Dominions and overseas customers. If so much food ceased to be a drug on the market, many problems would be solved.

In the meantime the British farmers' course of policy stands out clearly. It is to do all he can to make his industry as efficient as possible against the day when it will have to be weighed in the balance against other interests; to win the home consumer to his side by every means at his command; to keep down prices as low as is reasonable in order that he

may change over to peacetime conditions with the least dislocation, and therefore with the least danger of losing his market; and to stake out his claim on the community on the basis of service rendered and a more efficient and productive countryside to show for it. Rural bias and the ethics of the farming life don't mean much to townspeople, but they will think several times before they decide to scrap a machine that is working well.

L. F. EASTERBROOK

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to G. B. Hollings.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

With no fuss and as regularly as clockwork the gun crew fired round after round, and even the men on the platforms whom the explosion lifted into the air each time remained steadily at attention for the few seconds they were without foothold.—*Times.*

A wages clerk with a Glasgow firm of engineers told the Tribunal that he held the views he did through reading the Bible and Tolstoi. The Chairman—How do so many people get hold of books by foreigners? Why do you go stravaiging after Tolstoi?—It was largely an accident that led me to Tolstoi. He admitted to the Chairman that he had not read John Knox.—*Glasgow Herald.*

One of Norfolk's finest Shoots.—Required, 6 reliable guns, two days weekly. November-January; estimate 2,500 pheasants, 1,000 partridges, ground game, and wild fowling. Only nominal subscription (60 guineas) asked of safe guns. Noble owner's season's rearing expenditure over £1,000.—Advt. in *Times.*

Because the war is causing a shortage of starch, the British Launderers' Research Association are trying to find a substitute. Unless it is found there will soon be a run on soft-fronted dress shirts. A member of a men's clothing firm told me: "Soft shirts have been competing with the stiff variety for some time. It would not be surprising if, before the winter is over, soft shirts have won."—*Evening Standard.*

THEY NEVER LEARN

"THE Prussian Never Learns." So runs the title of a letter in the *Times*. It is a title that conveys a good deal of truth. If there is anything wrong with it, it is that it seems to imply that people who are not Prussians are capable of learning. The antipathy to learning, most historians will agree, is deep-seated in the human make-up. The Bourbons were once supposed to be the chief sufferers from it; but in most European countries the unteachables have been as difficult a problem as the untouchables have been in India. As recently as the Versailles Treaty—a treaty that might, by the way, have been very much worse—the things that were afterwards to cause trouble were mainly due to a number of non-Prussian unteachables.

It would be surprising indeed, if man on becoming a statesman should suddenly become teachable, seeing that for centuries he has been so unteachable in ordinary life. You can teach him the multiplication table; you can teach him to decline *mensa*; you can even teach him to use soap and water; but you cannot teach him how to make the best of an existence that lasts only a comparatively small number of hours. This may seem to be a pessimistic conclusion; and there have always been enough wise or relatively wise men in the world to cheer the would-be optimist up. At the same time, when you remember that most human beings have not even got rid of the folly of the love of money, you must admit that we have deliberately refused to learn one of the first lessons of philosophy. I myself love money, and I know.

It is true that, as I read the wise words of some ancient philosopher or religious teacher, I often feel a momentary contempt for money. I convince myself that, if I had only begun in time, I could have been happy in a labourer's cottage, cooking an occasional vegetable mess for a meal. At such moments I feel no envy of rich landlords or of the sons and daughters of plutocrats who dine and dance in the big hotels on the Riviera. With a philosopher in his hand, who would change places with a millionaire? Not I, for one. In such excellent company, I think of millionaires as being mainly unhappy people. I tell myself that there is more happiness in Camden Town than in Mayfair, and recall the tragic face of my uncle's landlord, comparing it with the ever-cheerful countenance of William John MacNabb, whose income consisted of eight shillings a week and a free cottage. Sitting in an armchair with a book in my hand, I envy William John MacNabb. How fine was his acceptance of life! What pleasure he got from doing honest work and eating his midday meal and the company of horses and children! Money could not buy such an existence. The philosophers are right. At the same time, when having laid the book of the wise man aside, I ask myself how I could live happily on a penny less than my present income, I find that I do not despise money quite so much as, a moment before, I thought I did. I seem to myself to have cut down my wants to a bare minimum. After all, William John MacNabb lived on the farm and never needed to take a taxi. Living in a more complicated civilisation, a sensitive man has often to take taxis. They enable him to keep appointments in time; they save wear and tear of nerves; they are a refuge from the contaminated air of over-crowded buses. Forty years ago, I imagine, I could have lived happily without taxis, but I was then in the flower of manhood and able to stand waiting for buses without getting exhausted. To-day I feel I need a taxi as an invalid needs a bath-chair. After one has reached sixty, it seems to me, one's taxi-fares should be deducted from one's taxable income.

How few of the things one enjoys can fairly be described as luxuries! How necessary are the things one enjoys to one's well-being! I observed the other day that an eminent journalist called on his fellow-citizens to spend less money during the war on drink and tobacco; but, when you have already cut your cigarettes down to 60 or 70 a day and your drinking to even less than your body calls for, how can you make further economies in these matters without endangering your physical fitness? "A man like you needs a stimulant," a doctor once said to me, and it is of little use paying a doctor a fee if you disobey him. I suspect the eminent journalist whom I have quoted of being a teetotaller and non-smoker. Had it been otherwise, he would have realised that the things he regards as luxuries are no more luxuries than beef or mutton.

Having arrived at this point, I am confronted by the question, "How is it possible for me to obtain the necessaries of life without this philosophically contemptible thing, money?" I am not, I may say, an extravagant person. I never buy a new suit of clothes unless I am compelled to do so. I seldom go to the theatre or to races. I neither drink champagne nor give it to my friends. I am content with the second or third-best hotels. If there were a leak in the roof, I should probably be in no hurry to have it repaired. I prefer a short meal to a long one and a small helping to a large one. My chief expense is Income Tax, and I should not pay even that if there were any decent way out of it. Yet life even on so Spartan a scale as this needs money to support it. And the result is that I desire and love money far more than any philosopher would admit that it ought to be loved and desired.

From this I draw the conclusion that I am unteachable—as unteachable as any Prussian. The very way in which I allow my happiness to depend on luxuries, and deceive myself into complacency by calling them necessaries, is evidence of this. After all, every man knows in his heart that the wise teetotaller and non-smoker is infinitely happier than the unwise smoker and non-teetotaller. A few things, mostly inexpensive, are necessary even to a wise man's happiness, but how small an income is needed for them! If only the City realised this, we should cease to have that rush for wealth that lays waste

the lives of leaders of commerce and industry. The City, however, swarms with unteachables. It is full of people who believe, like me, that money is in itself a glorious thing—that money is a necessity and wisdom a luxury.

Nor is it only in regard to money that we are incapable of learning. In all matters of conduct, we are equally disinclined to make use of the wisdom that has been handed down to us through the centuries. We cannot even benefit by the experience of our parents. A burnt child dreads the fire; but a burnt father's child remains a fearless fool. Each of us learns something, no doubt, on his way through life; but how much more we could have learnt if we had been capable of learning from the past! To know the folly of egoism, a sense of the comparative worthlessness of possessions, indifference to death and fear—these things, I tell myself, are more desirable than tobacco. But have I learnt to crave them as I crave for tobacco? I have not.

Hence, if nations are composed of unteachable individuals, we can hardly expect the nations themselves to be teachable. If a private citizen cannot learn from the experience of the preceding generation, how can a country do so? Prussia in this respect is fairly normal.

It would be foolish to be gloomy about the future of the human race, however. I still cherish the belief that the human race, though not very teachable, is in some degree teachable. If it were not so, England would never have agreed to the setting up of the South African Union or of the Irish Free State. She would have fought rather than do so, even if it had meant her ruin. Her comparative teachableness, it seems to me, is due to the fact that she possesses a democratic—however imperfect—system of government. Democracy is the only system of government under which human beings can learn. The other side of every great question is not hidden from them; in fact, they are all but compelled to listen to it. The pros and cons are discussed, and to be perpetually engaged in studying the pros and the cons is an education in itself. Even here, of course, prejudice come in, and party spirit, and blind leadership, to make learning difficult. But, on the whole, progress is made, and man moves a little forward without the necessity of shooting his neighbour. I will always believe that democracy is the best teacher till someone names a better one.

Till human beings become individually more teachable, however, we cannot expect any rapid arrival at a heaven on earth. The individual is always the clog on the wheel on the way to Utopia. I like him immensely, but I wish he were something less of a Bourbon. If only he could become a real Learner, like an initiate motorist, life would soon be a picnic. But so long as people like me are alive, I fear that this is not possible.

Y. Y.

HOME SERVICE

(News bulletin. Copyright reserved)

8 a.m.

"THERE is no new French communiqué.
In well-informed circles they say
Trade talks may soon be under way,
But we cannot yet ascertain whose.
The Council of War has conferred.
Some gunfire by neutrals was heard.
Some action at outposts occurred.
And that's the end of the news.

1 p.m.

"An Agency message last night
Describes a reconnaissance flight,
But over what ground, at what height,
There are so far (I'm sorry) no clues.
Off Sweden some smoke has been seen
Which may indicate some submarine.
On the Western Front all is serene.
And that's the end of the news.

4 p.m.

"Information has just been supplied
Camouflage has been recently tried
Our Air Force positions to hide—
A highly ingenious ruse.
From France strict reserve is maintained,
Some gunfire has not been explained.
It has semi-officially rained.
And that's the end of the news.

6 p.m.

"In the communiqué we repeat
Official reserve is complete.
According to Reuter, the Fleet
Has captured (I'm sorry) some crews.
Reconnaissance flights have been flown,
Important results have been shown.
The Market closed firmer in tone.
And that's the end of the news.

9 p.m.

"Some talks are proceeding somewhere.
We are ready by land, sea and air.
The War Council has met to compare
Completely identical views.
The French communiqué on the war
States that all is the same as before.
(I'm sorry, I'll read that once more)
And that's the end of the news."

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

THE HONOUR AND DIGNITY OF THE FREE MIND

By H. G. WELLS

[We print below the second half of the address which Mr. Wells was to deliver to the meeting of the P.E.N. at Stockholm which was prevented by the outbreak of war. We published the first half in our last issue.

I am trying in this address to put things in their proper relations, and to give the real relative values of the creative intelligence and, what ordinary people call, the powers that be. I want to put these individuals who are threatening the entire order and dignity of human life in their exact place in relation to the things we stand for . . .

At Dubrovnik we reasoned with the Nazi P.E.N. delegation, which was attempting to use our organisation for Nazi propaganda; they tangled themselves in our questions, and at last, in sorrow rather than in anger, we watched their withdrawal.

Since then the leaders of the Central Powers have continually challenged us for a verdict upon their cultural standing. It is not we who challenge them.

We are obliged to judge their claims to that standing by the exacting standards of gifted, honest and creative people and by our standards these men are entirely contemptible. Herr Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is an ill-written outpouring of patriotic beer-hall and café chatter. It is made up of chewed newspaper, of stuff wiped off café tables and of political hearsay, and the effusions of Herr Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda, are below the level of an ordinary, scurrilous newspaper hack. We are bound to deliver a verdict, and this is the verdict we, as an assembly of cultivated men and women, pledged to the maintenance of high creative effort, throughout the world, are bound to deliver. Such, we observe, is the quality of the intelligences that dominate political life, peace and war and the material welfare of millions of human beings.

I will not now carry this criticism of anti-cultural suppressions into the Russian province. I have discussed the disastrous, dogmatic obscuration of the Communist Dictatorship elsewhere. In 1934 I did my best to induce a number of writers in Russia to accept the broad principles of freedom

we profess and to come into the P.E.N. Club system. The powers were against me. Roughly, the case we should have to consider would be a parallel story. It is the same usurpation of the privilege of intellectual judgment by political upstarts, subservient officials and organising bodies.

It happens to be the case that these inferior individuals in superior positions can precipitate vast disasters upon mankind, but that is no reason for abandoning the conception of free expression which alone makes life worth living for most of us here. There is no more reason to blind ourselves to their intellectual insignificance, or to refrain from speaking frankly about it, than there would be for us to greet Al Capone on his approaching release from jail, where no doubt he has been writing a book, with an invitation to become our president and let bygones be bygones.

Again I say, let us retain our sense of values. We stand here for something greater than any government or any nation on earth. The duty of governments is to serve and protect human creativeness. Nothing, not even a world catastrophe, can alter that. A rat with a poisoned mouth may bite and kill a man. Rats before now have spread epidemics and destroyed millions of people. But a man is none the less a man and the rat remains a rat.

It is horrible, it is macabre, when a scarecrow, a flibberty gibbet, a grotesque bundle of clothes and newspaper stuffing, turns on a man and kills him, but that does not make the scarecrow a man, nor does it rid the man of his essential pride and dignity, unless that man gives way to fear.

Well, I do not think we are going to fall out about the supreme value of truth and beauty sought and won in freedom. You know there is an old Latin saying, " Great is truth and it will prevail." That may be so. But these are very dark times and it is quite possible that truth and beauty will *not* prevail. We have to face that. And it seems to me that the aristocrat in every true writer and artist and scientific worker will respond, that nevertheless the supreme value is free, unsullied accomplishment. That we will serve even in the face of ultimate disaster.

Great are truth and beauty, I would say, and whether they prevail or not, is a secondary matter. It is pleasant to be on the winning side but, for some obscure reason in the human heart, it is better to be yourself, and right within yourself, even if that involves danger, hardship and death.

But I have still something more to say, if you will bear with me a little longer. I have said things about the attack on human culture by violence. We do not surrender to that. We will do our proper and fundamentally inportant work, even if we have to die to do it.

But there is a more insidious way of losing our honour and that is by subordinating our gifts to propaganda.

I want to speak as plainly about propaganda as I have about this little dictator-murderer of culture, and to say, with an equal plainness, what we original literary, artistic and scientific workers, who set a value upon ourselves and upon the gift that is in us, should do and will have to do if we are confronted with—what shall I call it ?—an urgency to propaganda activities.

Now I have had some experience of propaganda. For a time I was in control of the propaganda against the German government conducted by the British Ministry for Propaganda from Crewe House, and the facts are given without justification and concealment in my *Autobiography*, and in a book by Sir Stuart Campbell, the *Secrets of Crewe House*.

The work I did was done in absolute good faith, and the gist of the business is that we, who lent ourselves to propaganda, were made fools of and ultimately let down by the traditional tricks of the Foreign Office.

We were kept in the dark about all sorts of secret entanglements to which these gentry had committed the country, and we were allowed to hold out hopes to the German people of a liberal post-war settlement our masters had no intention of making. We were tricked and, through us, the German liberals were cheated, and what these tricksters of the British Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay imagined they were doing except being very, very diplomatic and very clever about their double-crossing and generally having the laugh of their betters, I cannot imagine. Betters, I say without a blush. Every disastrous thing that has happened in the past twenty years was clearly foretold by a galaxy of writers and thinkers twenty years ago. Our politicians and officials were, relatively speaking, little, purblind, mean chaps. Orders and titles cannot alter that. It filled them with joy to snub the high-brows. The evil state of Europe to-day is traceable almost directly to the want of imagination, the self-protective cunning, and the deliberate breaches of faith made by them during those eventful years that immediately followed the Great War.

Well, once bit, twice shy. I am not going to be a stalking horse for the British Foreign Office again.

This is no remote problem I am discussing now. It is in all our minds here. I have been approached, and I suppose quite a number of us here have been approached, more or less officially, to do propaganda in Europe or America. One job suggested to me was to go to Paris to lecture in the good old *liaison* style, singing the praises of dear old Colonel Blimp and dear old Colonel Bramble, and explaining how very simple and democratic our British system is. I was to be made much of. Who knows if I might not have been given a ribbon for my coat ? And the effect of me and my fellow radical writers, going through our hoops obediently and faithfully, upon the still slightly critical and suspicious republican and radical side of the French intelligence, was to have been highly beneficial to the British diplomatic schemes. Such as they are. It would demonstrate that we were all good little government boys when it came to a show-down, that the real leaders of humanity are these bawlers and scribblers and knowing politicians. Hitler in hysteria and Mr. Chamberlain with his resolute expression.

Well, I have written and spoken very plainly about the contemporary British oligarchy, and, war or no war, I intend to go on doing so to the end. It is a mental paralysis for India, and it blocks the way to any sincere federal association of the more genuine democracies of the world. You will find all that set down very carefully and precisely in the *Fate of Homo Sapiens*, and I shall keep on saying and writing just exactly what I am moved to say and write about our side, or any side, in this dismal world situation, until I am forcibly stopped. If I lend myself to any propaganda, then by all my standards I shall be damned.

And I will be damned if I lend myself to any propaganda.

That is where I am in regard to this propaganda business and that, I hope, is how we all stand.

Most of us know that this time the propaganda activities are going to be much intensified, they are going to be far more cunning and elaborately misleading than ever before. I don't know how our French friends stand with regard to the Quai d'Orsay. Maybe they will tell us.*

Some of the writers who succumb to this are fascinated, I suppose, by the idea of effective intrigue ; some are bribed by simple flattery and the importance of semi-official touring ; some are such simpletons as I was in 1916 and believe that what they say will be noted, respected and honoured. But the reality of the case is, that any writer or artist, or teacher of repute, who allows himself to be put on a wire and dangled in this fashion, according to the narrow ideas of some Director of Propaganda, Herr Goebbels, Lord Perth, Lord Lloyd or what not, fails to grasp his real significance in the world. He is falling short of the essential aristocracy of his profession.

This issue is a plain one. It involves us all ; no part of the world of thought and creative imagination can escape it. It is a conflict between gangster adventurers or dull politicians on the one hand, trading on old national jealousies and resentments, stale and decaying and now poisonous dogmas and fear, who are blundering us down to destruction. That is one side of it. On the other hand, opposing this is the directive power of the fearless and unhampered human intelligence, expressing,

* They Have Alas ! They cease to be indepenient for the duration. H.G.W., Oct. 8th.

educating and discovering. For this last, and for its supremacy, we stand. This is the fundamental choice in life for every intelligent person, and by that choice mankind will triumph or end in complete disaster.

We are in revolt against this game of Power Politics which seeks to monopolise all this world for the triumphs of such poor fools as these leaders we have examined. We are not concerned in their infernal wars. We are in open and plain rebellion against them.

It is abundantly clear that none of the existing State and administrative organisations in the world, whether they are democratic, pseudo-democratic or authoritarian, are competent to carry on our collective human affairs. They are a menace, therefore, they are manifestly a sanguinary menace, they are a poisonous entanglement of the civilised life. Why should we creative workers cringe to these bonds that cut into us and will ultimately destroy us? Why do we not set ourselves to the plain need of evoking a new order in the imaginations of men?

We don't know how to set about it! What of that?

That is precisely the reason why we must go on as freely as possible. It is clear to all intelligent men that none of us knows enough, nor have we got our own minds sufficiently in order, to create a better system. All the more reason for sustaining a storm of thought and bold discussion and enlightenment. All the more reason that the human mind should have the utmost freedom and opportunity to shape a new conception of right living.

It is intolerable that it should be restrained in this subtle and difficult renascence by the officials and agents of the limited, obsolescent, belligerent State. It is intolerable that we should allow things to remain in such a train that these manifest inferiors can cripple and endanger the mental life of our race.

The opposition of the human intelligence to the contemporary State is now plain and unavoidable. It is one thing or the other. And, bear in mind that when I say that, I mean *all* contemporary States. I am not taking sides. I am not being a politician or a propagandist. I am proclaiming the revolt of the human intelligence against every form of State control.

This opposition has been put very forcibly by the secretaries of the German and Austrian P.E.N. Clubs in exile, in a recent letter to the *Manchester Guardian*. They give a list of German and Austrian writers, all patriots in 1914, all now neither for nor against any militant government, but opposed to every government that sets itself against liberty.

And from another point of view, also, the assertion of mental freedom and free criticism is becoming a primary duty for all intellectual workers. Under the war stresses of this time, which show no sign of immediate alleviation, life is being *collectivised* with extraordinary rapidity. In every country, not merely under the dictators but everywhere, the control of food and housing, of staple commodities, of great industries and transport, is being taken over by the State. I doubt if it will ever be possible to restore the old go-as-you-please system again. But this means a vast increase in the responsibility of those in control, and there can be little question of the inadequacy of the politicians, leaders and rulers, into whose hands these things are falling. Only one thing can control them, and that is an enlightened public opinion. I do not think the world can escape collectivism, but unless we insist upon the supreme necessity of free criticism, universal instruction, free publication, free discussion, it will be collectivism in the dark. As you have it now in Russia, in Germany. Where it is rapidly developing new forms of privilege and tyranny. In Britain and America you have collectivism coming on in the twilight, because their schools are poor, their universities timid and inadequate and their newspapers irresponsible. The plain need of the world is light and more light. The slogan that should unite all the intelligence in the world is "*Collectivism in the light.*"

Here in Stockholm a remnant of writers faces the plain issue before mankind. Are the creative and intellectual workers, the universities, the teachers, the hunters of knowledge and wisdom to be at the beck and call of obscure government officials obeying the behests and even anticipating the wishes of some gangster adventurer, some financial trickster or some vote-wangling politician; or are they the masters whom it behoves all governments and social organisations to heed and serve?

Is an enlightened world public opinion, instructed and sustained by a great educational renascence, to rule a world reborn, or are these adventurers to be left free, by our silences and our disorganisation, to destroy mankind? The whole intellectual life of man revolts against this intolerable, suffocating, murderous nuisance, the obsolescent national State. A world revolution to a higher social order, a collectivist world order, or utter downfall lies before us all.

THE CONTEMPORARY ART SOCIETY

To estimate the full value of the Contemporary Art Society it would be necessary to see the whole range of its purchases. Many of these are scattered, very beneficially, among our larger cities. Every year, we understand, the directors of the provincial museums that subscribe to the Society are invited to select works from the Society's collection, and presumably the paintings now showing at the Leicester Galleries have for the most part failed to excite the covetousness of these gentlemen. If this is the case, they must indeed be difficult to please—or can it be that they prefer the less felicitous of the Society's purchases? It is the intelligent practice of the Society to entrust every year a different member with the responsibility of selecting the works to be bought. A committee is not a good instrument for selecting pictures, particularly modern pictures: it usually plays for safety, and, as a compromise between the tastes of its individual members, buys pictures that nobody could acutely either like or dislike. The buyers for the Society, on the other hand, have evidently chosen pictures that they would have liked for themselves, though sometimes a trifle anxious, I suspect, not to horrify their colleagues. But one sees even in the case of works one does not like, that they possess an appealing flavour. Among the painters particularly well represented are Vanessa Bell, Gertler, Winifred Nicholson, Victor Pasmore, Ben Nicholson, Roger Fry, John Piper, William Roberts, Barbara Mackenzie Smith and Glyn Philpot. The Frances Hodgkins deserves a good place in the Tate. If it had done nothing but buy the pictures in this charming exhibition, the Contemporary Art Society would have a strong claim to the support of all who care for painting. But to appreciate the extent of its work one must visit the museums that have benefited from its generosity—notably the Tate Gallery, the trustees of which have hitherto been less discriminating than the Society in their purchases.

It is discreditable that the Society should have so few subscribers compared with the National Arts Collection Fund. In the United States contemporary art finds many patrons among the rich; even film-stars, like Mr. Edward G. Robinson, are enthusiastic collectors. Here no millionaire seems able to care for a picture unless its painter is safely dead and buried. That our motor manufacturers and tobacco magnates remain so consistently Philistine may be attributed to their education. But how mysterious is the insensibility to contemporary art of those rich aristocrats who have been brought up among the masterpieces of English painting, yet remain blind to the modern heirs of Gainsborough and Constable. An aristocracy that has ceased to give its patronage to art is like a tart who has lost her looks: it may still be useful, but it has no right to be expensive. A few civil servants, barristers, writers and similar men of the professional class have now assumed the duties (without possessing the resources) of the eighteenth-century oligarchs. It is among these that the Contemporary Art Society finds its principal supporters (though Lord

Howard de Walden has been munificent); it is to them that the continuance of art in this country is chiefly due.

The Leicester Galleries are also showing a very enjoyable collection of English paintings and foreign water-colours and drawings. Duncan Grant, Rodrigo Moynihan, Paul Nash, Victor Pasmore, Ivon Hitchens, Claude Rogers, Matthew Smith and Leila Faithful show notably good and characteristic works. A new Sickert has the inevitable lovely paint. Mr. Kenneth Martin's picture and drawing should help to make his reputation. Mr. Ben Nicholson shows an object entitled "Gouache Version, 2/6 (*hand-painted*)." Although hand-painted it would not appeal to me as much of a bargain at half-a-crown, but it is priced at seventeen guineas.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Three One Act Plays at The Embassy

Miss Beatrix Lehmann, in an attempt to combat the widespread unemployment among actors, has got together a small company in three one act plays, with an eye, perhaps, more on the travelling entertainments which a war demands than on the ordinary theatre. Her first selection is two sketches, by Sean O'Casey, *A Pound in Demand* and *The End of the Beginning* with a short Strindberg, *The Pariah*, sandwiched between them. The O'Caseys are frankly slapstick, each with a conventional joke-theme, the first a drunk, the second the inconsequential incompetence of stage Irish. They require nothing but the loudest music hall treatment, and two straight actors, John Laurie and Edgar Bruce have, with Miss Lehmann's assistance, turned themselves into a very competent sort of Laurel and Hardy team. This is the kind of thing which depends very much on the mood of the audience. A house depleted by rain and black-out is no fair test; but one can imagine them being very successful—the second especially—in a camp. Strindberg might seem odd stuff to give the troops. But *The Pariah*, in Miss Lehmann's reading at least, is a pleasantly serious, but not intense, contrast. Played by Noel Howlett as the professor and Alan Wheatley as the crook, it pretends to nothing more than it is—a sketch of a shifty third-rate little gangster outplayed by the tenacious observation of a solid respectable scientist.

"Gibraltar," at Studio One

The opening sequences of *Gibraltar* give the impression that the film is going to be about the sinking of British ships in the Mediterranean during the Spanish Civil War. Alas, it moves hastily on to less controversial ground and becomes a very hackneyed spy story in which the spies act, apparently, on the assumption that the more suspiciously they behave the less they will be suspected. Erich von Stroheim plays the megalomaniac master-spy who keeps a coiffeur's establishment in Tangier and deludes his customers while simultaneously terrifying the audience. In his power is Viviane Romance whom he employs to extract secrets from the British officers in Tangier. Mlle. Romance is of the Mata Hari school and dances, with castanets, her way into a handsome officer's heart: she puts on and takes off pair after pair of silk stockings and finally extracts Admiralty Code 17 while losing her heart to the officer. Never mind: the officer is really in the counter-espionage service, and Mlle. Romance dies penitently and conveniently, leaving the way open for a more suitable marriage. This film unfortunately does not live up to the standards one has come to expect from French films. The direction is uninspired and the photography dull, and if it were not for the acting of Erich von Stroheim and the exceedingly attractive Mlle. Romance it would hardly be worth a visit.

"French Without Tears," at the Plaza

Although this film is directed by Mr. Anthony Asquith, it is less amusing than the play was at the Criterion. Good stage dialogue is *legato*, good film dialogue *staccato;* and a line that has been carefully designed to carry on the flow of a scene, is not fitted to conclude a sequence. (Carve a page of good prose into three-line paragraphs in the *Daily Mirror* style, and the effect is similarly disappointing.) In this film the necessary dismemberment has been ingeniously operated, but the dialogue required more drastic revision. The chief fault of the film, however, is the casting. For some reason—it cannot have been a good one, but the film-industry glories in unreasonableness—two Hollywood performers have been given the part so subtly played by Miss Kay Hammond and Mr. Rex Harrison. The cynical young gentleman has dwindled into a simple football-player from Yale; and, even more disastrously the siren *malgré elle* has coarsened into a common vamp. Miss Diana Drew gave a convincing and skilful character-sketch of a tart, thus making nonsense of the story. It is a disaster that Miss Hammond was not persuaded to play the role again; failing that, at least she might have run through the part with Miss Drew, and explained to her that Diana must be represented as a lady. The rest of the cast is excellent. Mr. Ronald Calver repeats his rich performance of the Commander, Mr. David Tree is as comic as he is charming, Mr. Jim Gerald makes the Professor larger (and more French) than life, and we should have liked a lot more of Mr. Morgan. The film is very sweet on the eye: in his visual sense Mr. Asquith is comparable with the best French directors. There is an idyllic bicycling scene, and the carnival is the dizziest we have seen—it could not be more enchantingly unlike real carnivals. Otherwise a short naval scene is the highspot of the show. But why the final wedding? A propaganda film about the Army entitled *Arf a Mo, Hitler* was in the same programme. It will do little harm here, but it is unsuitable for export.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, October 28th—
- R. H. S. Crossman: "The Growth of Nationalist and Racial Ideas," Conway Hall, 2.15.
- Meeting to celebrate Czechoslovakia's Independence Day, King George's Hall, Great Russell Street, 3.
- London Symphony Orchestra with Albert Sammons, Queen's Hall, 2.30.
- "Rigoletto," Sadler's Wells.
- Intimate Opera, Mercury, 7.30. Till November 4th.

SUNDAY, October 29th—
- London Philharmonic Orchestra, Queens Hall.

MONDAY, October 30th—
- "To-night at 8.30," Embassy.
- National Gallery Concerts, Monday to Friday, at 1, Tuesday and Friday at 4.30.

TUESDAY, October 31st—
- Madge Waller: "Planning and the Farmer," Housing Centre, 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1, 1.
- James Laver: "The Graphic Arts and Social Life," Royal Institution, 2.30. And November 7th, 14th and 21st.
- "The French for Love," Criterion.

WEDNESDAY, November 1st—
- Everyman's Concert, Rudolf Steiner Hall, 3.
- "George and Margaret," Piccadilly.

Correspondence

RIGHT REPLY TO HITLER

[We continue to receive a very large number of letters on this and kindred subjects. Space forbids us to print more than a small percentage of them. May we appeal to correspondents to be brief? —ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—Your admirable article on "The Right Reply to Hitler" was unfortunately not the reply given by Mr. Chamberlain. His answer to the peace offensive was a barren negative, throwing the whole onus of refusal to negotiate on ourselves; yours was a bold diplomatic counter-offensive, which would have branded Hitler, had it failed, as the man who preferred the carnage of war to a reasonable peace, and had it succeeded would have won all we are fighting for without shedding another drop of blood on either side.

It is extremely doubtful that a second opportunity of peace by negotiation will occur. But if we are now about to begin the longest and most bitter struggle in our national history—the official "three years war" is surely the dream of some learned recluse transported from his desk at the British Museum to the Ministry of Information!—it is more than ever necessary for our Government to explain to its own people and to the neutral countries on what conditions it will proclaim an armistice and what, broadly speaking, are the terms it will offer or accept at the subsequent peace conference. Now is the moment, before the vindictive anger of millions of tragically bereaved families makes another Versailles inevitable. It is cold comfort to be told by our political leaders that we are out to destroy the Government of a neighbouring country—so far as Hitler is concerned *il faut en finir*; they seem to

regard victory as an end in itself, and to forget that the most glorious victory is not worth a dime save as a means to a just, honourable and enduring peace.

How much more support they would win for our cause from all over the world if they were to declare publicly *the immediate conditions* of our acceptable peace and *the ultimate aims* that would inspire their policy at an international conference for the reorganisation of Europe after the war. It is surely vital to distinguish at the outset between the immediate, minimum conditions of a peaceful settlement with Germany, and the maximum ideal aims that should guide us in the shaping of a new Europe but must depend for their realisation on the amount of agreement obtainable from other Governments.

We could not with honour sheathe our sword without proclaiming the freedom of the Polish provinces of Poland and the Czech towns and villages of Bohemia and Moravia. But a German promise to set up a new Poland and a new Czech State would be a mockery without a guarantee for their independence and integrity from Russia as well as from Germany and the Allies. These two conditions are surely the *sine qua non* of any peace of which we need not feel ashamed.

But if the potential causes of future wars are to be removed we should examine frankly the main sources of friction between nations. We must be ready to discuss disarmament and arbitration, and to endure whatever sacrifice of sovereign rights may be indispensable if law is to prevail over brute force in international relations; to create economic conditions of free exchange and free access to raw materials in the place of the autarchic war economy of to-day; and to make trusteeship a reality by extending the mandatory system and speeding up self-government in Asia and Africa.

It is encouraging to know that the ripe wisdom of Mr. Lloyd George favours a positive and immediate statement of peace terms or war aims, and to observe that public opinion is rallying strongly to his support. In the meantime, while we do all we can to help this bungling Government to bring the war to a speedy and successful conclusion, let us hope that the constructive criticism of people with independent minds may steer it clear of some at least of the most obvious obstacles ahead of it. LISTOWEL

House of Lords.

SIR,—Mr. Keynes admits that "the ideal peace" is possible, but fears that events may prove it to be unattainable, and that we shall have to fall back on a compromise peace, dictated by post-war circumstance. We have had some experience during the last twenty years of what such a peace means. And, unlike Mr. Keynes, I cannot help feeling that anything which proved "a possible obstacle" to it would be of the greatest value. It might at least remind our rulers or enable others to remind them more compellingly, at a time when they may be anxious to forget it, of their declared intention of inaugurating after the war a real peace, based on a new co-operative order in Europe and the world. Nor need a declaration now of peace terms or aims be rigid, as Mr. Keynes suggests, however precise in certain fundamental requirements, such as those put forward by the National Peace Council. The essential thing is that they should show our sincere readiness for sacrifice of national privilege for the good of the world.

I cannot feel that such terms would prove an "obstacle to peace hereafter," if we mean peace and not merely a camouflaged perpetuation of the *status quo*. And may it not be that the Government recoils from declaring any positive peace terms and is, to quote your own words in a different context, "unable to think them out now," because here too "it will not face the consequences" or the cost?

In any case Mr. Keynes's excessive concern for future circumstances surely puts him at their mercy. In the degree that we have faith in the power of constructive good-will, we can *create* the circumstances within which we shall have to work. And isn't it just our inability to take the creative initiative, our preference for waiting upon events, which has forced us to-day, against our will, into a death grapple with the dynamic of destruction?

Widdington, Newport, Essex. HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

SIR,—I should never call Mr. Shaw silly, and so I hope to escape the fate of being laughed at which he prophesies for Desmond MacCarthy. But there is such a thing as being too clever by half, and it often has the same effect as silliness, for extremes do sometimes meet. What troubles one devoted admirer of the Bernard Shaw of the John Bull's Other Island days is that to-day he seems to ignore nine-tenths of the facts in a situation—which in 1906 he would have pounced upon like a hawk—and nine-tenths of the standards and values which he stood for in 1906 and thereby won our devoted admiration. The Shaw of 1906 who saw the importance of the Denshawi "horrors" is absolutely blind to the fact that the dictators and totalitarianism have during the last ten years made Denshawi horrors the rule of life for millions in Europe and threaten to make them the rule of life for all Europe. To ignore that fact and to talk as if there is no difference between the government of and life in Germany and the government of and life in France, for instance, is to ignore the facts which constitute the whole of our terrible dilemma—whether we should resist barbarism by force or yield to it. No amount of cleverness can prevent a disquisition on the situation which ignores the central fact and all standards of value, even when it is by Bernard Shaw, from being irrelevant and—to those who still remember Denshawi—depressing. LEONARD WOOLF

SIR,—I have no desire to take up the cudgels in defence of my daughter (Princess Antoine Bibesco) whose letter you deride in your issue of the 21st of this month; but she is only expressing in a few words what many of us think. I may be wrong, but to regular readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION I always thought it was strongly averse to Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Munich—in the same way as it has been against all the Prime Minister's policy of Peace. This at any rate was what I gathered from its leader-writers, and the correspondence of its contributors. THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, the *News Chronicle*, and the *Star* were never tired of denouncing the word "appeasement." What is the contrary to this word if it is not war?—or would they prefer "compromise" (never a very inspiring banner under which to fight).

I belong to the old Asquith-Spender Liberals who are neither represented in the House of Commons, nor in the press.

Because the Prime Minister's efforts to avert war when he went to Munich failed, it does not prove that he was wrong: on the contrary, you have only to read page 293 of Hermann Rauschning's book, *Germany's Revolution of Destruction*, to see the effect which his visit had upon Herr Hitler. I do not suppose that the German Dictator ever read our Liberal newspapers, but if he did, he would have had every reason to believe that the British Prime Minister's peace policy had no backing, either from Liberals, or Labour in this country.

It is not possible to have a General Election now that we are engaged in war. But had it been held after the Prime Minister's visit to Munich, I have not a doubt that he would have been returned to power by a large majority. MARGOT OXFORD

[Our perhaps excessively tart footnote to Princess Antoine Bibesco's letter was directed to the statement that we or any other sane people had "desired" war. We never quarrelled with Mr. Chamberlain for visiting Hitler; it was the right thing to do. We have criticised him (a) for the policy that led up to Munich; (b) for collaborating with Hitler and indeed sending Germany's ultimatum to the Czechs for him; and (c) for the Polish guarantee which, as we have urged, in company with Mr. Lloyd George, was a disastrous mistake unless based on a prior alliance with the U.S.S.R.

The tragedy to-day makes all efforts to score political points futile and frivolous. There were, in fact, two policies. Peace for this country might conceivably have been secured for some time by leaving Eastern Europe to Hitler, the policy which Mr. Chamberlain first attempted. Peace for a longer time and peace of a more hopeful kind could, we believe, have been secured by the policy of Collective Security plus willingness for peaceful change, as envisaged in the Covenant of the League. The inclusion of the U.S.S.R. as part of the peace front was an essential for that. We urged this policy as the best chance of peace. We did not get our way: we got the Polish pact. The mixture of the two policies was fatal. To-day we desire peace on terms that give reasonable hope of permanence, and in this we are sure Princess Bibesco and Lady Oxford agree with us.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—Those who advocate "a Peace Conference before the War" have the advantage of a plausible case, but how would it work out in practice?

If any kind of appeasement acceptable to British public opinion had been remotely possible, I am convinced there would have been no war at all. What is the position now, when, after a fortnight's hostilities, the Polish Government, guaranteed by Britain and France, fled into Rumania and was interned, whilst only Soviet intervention saved the whole of Poland from the Nazi heel? Whilst on the Western Front, the French forces have retreated

from even the meagre advances of the first few days of war (made, we are told, to help the Poles!) Does anyone suppose that, in these circumstances, and with the British and French still preserving the "cold shoulder" policy to Soviet Russia, which is largely responsible for the war, that Hitler will meekly enter upon a conference to discuss how much of his booty he is to be allowed to keep? Does anyone seriously believe that he will consent to disgorge even the tiniest fractions of his gains in Poland, Czechoslovakia or Austria?

If there is any other alternative to continuing the war, many of us, who loathe and hate the idea of war, will be glad to hear of it. If, however, the proposed "Conference" is merely put forward as a piece of British tactics, surely a clumsier and more dubious expedient can hardly be imagined. J. STEWART COOK

Crossways, Osborne Road,
Windsor, Berks.

SIR,—To shut one's eyes to unpleasant facts is cowardly and foolish. Let us, therefore, look boldly at some of the least pleasant:

(1) The salient fact about this war is that nobody wants it, except perhaps a few fanatics who see in it a chance of world power, or of world revolution.
(2) If England, France, and Germany are unable to find a peace formula, and decide that they must settle their differences by fighting to a finish, the war is likely to become unrestricted, and parents in all three countries will soon be searching ruined and burning houses for the bodies of their children.
(3) Once this happens, nothing can stop the war until one or other of the three nations breaks up by revolution, which with the support of Russia is most likely to take the form of Communism.
(4) At the best, therefore, we shall have one extra Communist State, and two weakened democracies to compete with an undamaged Russia.

The above facts are unpalatable, and will be hotly rejected by many readers, but those who feel most strongly should make sure that their views are not coloured by desire, or even by fear.

To me, a person interested in poison gas and in other and newer forms of warfare, an unrestricted war would be interesting because it would show how these weapons work out in practice, but I am altruistic enough to think that it should be avoided for the sake of those who do not share my curiosity.

16 Market Street, H. A. SISSON
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.

WAR AIMS

SIR,—One may disagree with Mr. Joelson in (*a*) his admiration of the way in which Great Britain has discharged her trusteeship towards the African peoples; (*b*) his belief that native welfare will be advanced by the amalgamation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland; and (*c*) his view that Southern Rhodesia has splendidly discharged her responsibility in self-government (a privilege limited virtually to white people), but I think he is right in pointing out that many people of pronouncedly liberal views talk of internationalising the colonies in a loose and confusing way.

Whatever ideal scheme may be formulated in respect to colonies the views of the black, brown and white people concerned are relevant. Nor can the system of colonial administration adopted by the respective colonial powers or the progress already made towards self-government in the respective dependent colonies be ignored. Is the suggestion of "internationalising" Southern Rhodesia to-day at all practical or of adopting some such administration in the West Indian Colonies?

Obviously, what is wanted is the widest possible extension of self-government, and where that is not practicable as yet, some form of effective supervision and responsibility for colonial development on a wider basis than national sovereignty offers. That must include ways of securing co-operation amongst the colonial powers; accountability in respect to policy and activity, the use where possible of the services which non-colonial nations can offer, a revision and extension of mandates in certain cases, and economic equality for all nations. There are areas possibly where some form of national co-operative administration might be experimented with, but very little solid thinking has been done in respect to the difficulties.

We have also loosely talked of revising and extending the mandates systems, but important as that is, that policy is inadequate for colonies so varied as those in the British Empire. What is certain is that when this war is through, the colonial issue in all its economic and political aspects cannot be left out of any peace settlement. I hope the challenge of the Editor of East Africa that people of liberal views should clarify their minds as to what solution to the colonial problem they propose, will stimulate further discussion on the subject.

House of Commons. A. CREECH JONES

SIR,—A night or two ago I heard more or less by accident a short-wave broadcast to Germany by Mr. Noel Baker. So far as my German allows me to judge it was excellent for it appealed to the Geman worker in the only way in which he can be appealed to—as a fellow member of the politically conscious working class. No German who remembers 1918 will trust a Liberal or a Conservative; he may perhaps listen to a Labour man who did at least protest against Versailles.

And from that I was led to ask why the Labour Party is doing so little of its international duty. It alone can offer to the German workers some guarantee that if they turn on Hitler they will not be vilely ill-treated as they were in 1918 when they turned on the Kaiser. Why is it not attempting to draft and publish some peace terms to which Socialists can rally? Why is it not in conference with the French Socialist Party to that end?

In 1917 the war might have been brought to a just end by the effort of the Socialist International to hold the Stockholm conference. Those who remember that time and the high hopes that for the moment were justified should be endeavouring to re-create the power that was defeated then. I do most sincerely hope to hear in the near future that the Labour Party has taken the initiative in summoning an international Labour conference, including not only the Allied Socialists, not only the parties in Scandinavia and the Low Countries, but also the illegal parties of the dictator countries and (since there are no political parties of importance in the U.S.) the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O.

Let it also remember that till a few weeks ago every Russian worker believed it his sacred duty to fight Fascism, and cannot have forgotten seven years' propaganda in seven weeks. Since political difficulties are in the way, let it be the General Council of the T.U.C. which sends a delegate to the All Russian Council of Trades Unions to take up the oft-offered, oft-neglected suggestion of a common struggle against Fascist aggression. While a channel is still open, let us use it; it may not be open long.

RAYMOND POSTGATE

SIR,—We are fighting against Hitlerism, not Hitler. May I say this in reply to your editorial comment? Far be it from me to prophesy what metamorphoses any tyrant to-day may undergo. If we want peace by negotiation, we should not choose to dictate to any people who may or may not be their national hero, however singular. (The unexpectedness of variety is part of the price of liberty. The Germans prefer Wagner; and we the B.B.C.) The basic question is: Will the German people come into federation or not? I recall a conversation with Admiral von Spee's son in October, 1933, in which I said that a Germany outside the League (or federal scheme) must be a pariah under international law. That alone remains the issue.

If, of course, either Hitler or Germany, overlooking their fundamental weakness, decline conference on the basis of these essential sacrifices of sovereignty for each, and the end of the State-is-All system, then the war is on. It must be fought through efficiently by a consolidation of the West until Germany will accept this—unless, of course, we prefer to see the domination of the world by a Bolshevised Germany, allied with bank-robbing Honest Joe, which is presupposed to be in a position to fight better than ourselves. This last seems to me fantastic, unless we assume Lenin right; the Army discredited; and the revolution (itself Nazi-Bolshevik) here in this country. GEORGE CATLIN

2 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.3.

LABOUR AND WAR

SIR,—Mr. Keynes speaks of the defence of freedom being left to Blimp and the Old School Tie. Has it escaped his notice that the Labour Party, having steadily advocated resistance to aggression, is now logically adhering to its position? The people of whose wavering Mr. Keynes complains, fall into two groups, (1) The Communists, who are not free agents, (2) People who woke up

to the danger a few months or a year or two ago and began to advocate resistance to aggression without properly considering what, in certain circumstances it would mean: not unnaturally, their nerves have failed at the crisis.

Blimp and the Old School Tie will fight, all too readily, for freedom or any other excuse for fighting: but they are not capable of producing constructive ideas at the end of it. For some time it has been a fashionable intellectual amusement to point out certain obvious faults in the Labour Party: but is there any other instrument available for those who want to defend freedom now and to construct peace afterwards?

MICHAEL STEWART,
(Prospective Labour Parliamentary Candidate, E. Fulham).

15 Lock's Hill, Frome, Somerset.

THE FUTURE OF AUSTRIA

SIR,—It may be too early to enter upon a discussion of such problems as the future of Austria after the destruction of Hitlerism. Yet there are certain aspects of this question which are of importance even now since they are closely connected with the strength of the forces the democracies will be able to muster.

I am referring to the question whether a solution of the Austrian problem can be sought in the direction of a restoration of the old Hapsburg monarchy or in some other form of conservative and retrograde régime.

Any examination of this question must be based upon the fundamental facts governing the social and political structure of Austria. Unfortunately some of these facts have been lost sight of, or distorted, in consequence of the unhappy period from 1934 to 1938 when Austrian democracy was superseded by a so-called "authoritarian" régime. This unhappy interlude largely contributed to create the present confusion.

If one reads in the press that in France Prince Starhembergis busy giving interviews about his future part in an Austrian Legion one cannot but be filled with dismay. Austrians have not forgotten the Starhemberg Legions of the past: this gentleman's private army of Fascists which did so much to push ill-starred Austria along the path at the end of which stood Hitler's entry into Vienna.

It would be a great error to think that the scant remnants of the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg régime who may have survived the utter failure of their experiment could play a role in any future revival. They are ghosts of the past. The ideas and the forces which they represent have been tried and found wanting.

In four years of "authoritarian" régime, wielding all the power of the State, disposing of all the means of propaganda and borrowing a good deal of Nazi methods they tried to impose their "Patriotic Front" upon the people of Austria—and failed. Far from keeping Hitler out they merely helped to pave the way for him.

Now it is sometimes said that Hapsburg monarchists are different from those semi-Fascist reactionaries whom history has rejected. But (quite apart from the fact that Otto Hapsburg repeatedly declared his sympathy with those people) it should be borne in mind that in Austria the Hapsburg monarchy has always been tantamount to reaction. The Austrian people do not discriminate between their oppressors of yesterday and the day before—they certainly do not regard them as possible successors to the oppressors of to-day.

In Austria (where middle-class liberalism has been dead a long time) the ideas of liberty have always found their expression in the great Labour and Socialist movement. At the last democratic elections in 1930 Austrian Socialists represented 41 per cent. of the electorate and two-thirds of the population of Vienna. It was when that great democratic movement was crushed that Austria—already besieged by Hitler—was deprived of her most determined defenders.

This error has to be repaired if Austria is to be saved from the grip of Hitlerism. There is serious hope of a coming revolt in Austria against the Nazis. But surely it is not the Austrian aristocrats who will perform a revolution—it is the Austrian workers. And they will look for guidance (as they have done for half a century) to the Socialist Party.

There is, moreover, another aspect of this problem. As things have now shaped out there is every likelihood that the revolution in Germany, when it comes, will take place under the powerful influence of a geographical as well as political fact: the neighbourhood of the Soviet Union. Now in Germany the Socialist movement, unhappily, is divided and discredited. The Austrian Socialist movement is nothing of the kind. It has preserved full unity of outlook and organisation. It still enjoys a prestige which even reaches beyond the frontiers of Austria and its word carries weight also with the workers of Germany.

It may be of tremendous importance, one day, that in an area torn and shattered by the war and by political and social earthquakes there should be left a solid Socialist force whose strength and reputation remain unimpaired. It is this force which should not be thwarted by the erroneous idea that the liberation of Austria could be accomplished by a step backwards.

Paris. AUSTRIACUS

STALINISM

SIR,—In a footnote to Truth's letter on Stalinism, you write: "We have blamed the British Government for not obtaining that alliance (Anglo-Soviet) *when it could have done so.*"

As a regular reader of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, I have seen this statement in one form or another many times, and would like to know, in common with several other regular readers of yours, on what you base this assertion, particularly as a note on a letter which logically knocks the ground from under your feet.

The fact that no such agreement was made, when it was so obviously to our advantage to have one, is not necessarily the measure of the crass stupidity of our Government: there is at least, in view of the Russo-German pact, an even chance that obstacles such as impossible demands by the Soviet Government, or Poland's refusal to have any Russian troops on her territory had more to do with the final result than any congenital failings either in our negotiators or in their masters, the Cabinet.

If Poland and the Baltic countries made difficulties that were decisive in *not* getting Russia on our side, as a guaranteeing party, how can you or anyone else say with such certainty and assurance that all that was lacking to secure the agreement was the will, in the members of the British Government, to make it? It does not seem to me to make sense. STANLEY HUGHES

Harecroft Hall, Gosforth, Cumberland.

[An Anglo-Soviet Pact was open to us at any time between the signing of the Franco-Soviet Pact in 1935 (or before) and some point, not exactly ascertainable, in 1939. We have yet to hear of any ground for doubting the sincerity of Stalin's invitation to a consultation at Bucharest directly after Hitler's seizure of Prague. How far it was sincerely offered to us after May, when M. Litvinov, who had always stood for the policy of co-operation with the Western democracies, was dismissed, we cannot say. The evidence suggests that it would still have been obtainable if Britain had not continued the policy of snubbing the U.S.S.R., which asked for visits from Lord Halifax and Viscount Gort but got Mr. Strang and a not very distinguished military mission. The Germans were wiser and sent Herr von Ribbentrop with full powers.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

INDIA AND THE TORIES

SIR,—The recent Indian declaration by the Viceroy shows up the Tory mentality in its typicality. No one can be surprised if Indian opinion is sceptical. The Viceroy has promised a new Round Table Conference and "association" of public opinion in the conduct of the present war. Now, "association" may mean anything from zero to infinity, and, in the absence of more specific assurances, the chances are that it will be much nearer the lower figure. In the previous Round Tables, we had the curious procedure by which the British Government kindly nominated the "representatives" of India, taking special care to see that the Conference was loaded and unduly weighted with feudal or spurious minority interests—the intention being to show up to the world the extent of Indian disunity. And the upshot was the 1935 Act—a ponderous masterpiece of ingenuity which, beneath the frills of democratic appearances, conceals impregnable Maginot Lines for the defence of baronial and vested interests. The minority problem in India is no more insoluble than was, for example, the French-Canadian problem in Canada. If the Tories wish to exploit and exaggerate the problem as an excuse for the perpetuation of *status quo*, the choice is at least theirs. Not that we have not seen in recent years in Europe and elsewhere other mighty champions of minority interests. But British and French Labour may have time to ponder whether they are fighting for an old map or for a new order of social living. If the Tories are so incapable that they cannot tackle the problem of democracy and federation in India (where they have full authority) due to

the existence of " a diversity of interests," can we trust them with the similar but more complex task in Europe? For the Indian problem of democracy and federation is only the world problem in miniature.

Let it be conceded for once that the British Parliament has no more right to frame the Indian constitution than has the Nazi Government to frame Czech or Polish constitutions. Also that the Indians have a right to a full and responsible share in the formulation of the decisions that the conduct of the war involves. To be more specific, can the British Government concede that (1) (a) the proposed Round Table Conference (or rather constituent assembly) will be formed by popular elections on the widest franchise, and not arbitrarily manned by the British Government; (b) its recommendations will be binding on the British Government. (2) Popularly chosen Indian leaders will have full and responsible authority in the conduct of war, even to the point of being able unilaterally to withdraw from the war at any moment, should popular leaders so decide.

But can the Ethiopian change his skin or the Tory his obsolete thought-process? Chamberlain cannot trust Hitler thanks to his past record. The past record of the Tory Government in India is repression, trickery and steady resistance to the tidal wave of democracy.

A. K. DATTA

Cambridge.

GERMAN WIRELESS

SIR,—I notice that the current number of the leading British wireless journal gives the wavelengths and daily times of all the news bulletins broadcast in the English language from foreign stations, *except those from Germany*.

This notable omission can only bear one of two interpretations, viz.:

(i) That the German stations broadcast facts concealed from the British people, which the British people cannot bear to hear.

(ii) That the German stations broadcast lies which would be swallowed by a people so gullible as the British.

I question the truth of either interpretation. Moreover, as you, Sir, will be well aware, Dr. Goebbels has arranged the technical details of his propaganda broadcasts so cleverly that a great many British listeners have been listening to his stations ever since the war commenced, and find them extremely funny. I forbear from describing the details of his ingenuity lest I should enable the few listeners for whose sake the censorship of wireless programmes is imposed, from picking up Dr. Goebbels' news bulletins. There cannot be many of them, as nearly all my neighbours have willy-nilly picked him up long ago.

B. H. DAVIES

S. Barnabas Vicarage,
Brassey Road, Bexhill-on-Sea.

CIVIL LIBERTY IN WARTIME

SIR,—On Saturday, November 4th, at 2 p.m., my Council is holding a delegate conference on the above subject at the Beaver Hall, Garlic Hill, Cannon Street, E.C.4. The speakers will be Professor Harold J. Laski, Mr. Robert Willis (Secretary of the London Trades Council), Mr. A. S. Comyns Carr, K.C., and Mr. W. H. Thompson, Chairman of the Executive of the National Council for Civil Liberties.

Already a large number of delegates are attending from industrial, political and cultural organisations, and visitors will be admitted on payment of 1s. each so far as the capacity of the hall allows, The potential dangers of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act. 1939, and the Regulations, with concrete instances, will be discussed at the Conference, and the means by which, while fighting totalitarianism abroad, we may preserve our democracy at home and secure the full restoration of our liberties after the war.

The National Council for Civil Liberties,
Morley House, 320 Regent Street, London, W.1.

RONALD KIDD,
Secretary.

EDUCATION OF EVACUEES

SIR,—In your leading article you say " children in the reception areas are still getting, at the most favourable, much less than half an education!" This, like most sweeping statements is demonstrably untrue.

Some 230 girls of the Ealing County Secondary School evacuated to this town are having normal lessons at the High School on five and a half days in each fortnight. The other five working days are spent in the British Legion Hall where the girls have lessons and private study. On these days they are also taken in relays to the playing fields for hockey and other games. They are thus occupied in strictly educational pursuits for ten and a half days as against the ten days which constitute the normal working fortnight. This can scarcely be called " much less than half an education."

Our problems have been simplified by the sympathy and understanding of the Headmistress, Governors and Staff of the High Wycombe High School and I am aware that many schools have not yet been able to arrange such extensive facilities for their pupils, but I think that your comment does less than justice to the initiative of the thousands of teachers who are working very hard to keep education alive in spite of confusion in high places.

The High School for Girls,
High Wycombe, Bucks.

BETTY M. L. UNDERHILL

[There is still no general rule for the country; the organisation of education for evacuees is steadily improving, but our generalisation is not far from the truth.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

LIBRARIES

SIR,—In view of certain incorrect statements that have been made with reference to Libraries connected with the University of London will you kindly allow me to state that the University of London Library, in its new building at Bloomsbury, has continued open during the Crisis and since the outbreak of war. The reading rooms offer their usual service to Readers, and in addition a borrowing service is being maintained. Tutorial Classes are also receiving a full supply of books which are sent out as travelling libraries to the various centres which are being formed.

In order to provide special wartime facilities for evening students who have been temporarily deprived of the use of other libraries, an experimental arrangement has been made for opening the University Library until a later hour on two evenings each week. Until further notice the hours of opening for reference and borrowing are as follows:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

University of London Library,
London, W.C.1.

REGINALD A. RYE,
Goldsmiths' Librarian,
Univ. Lond.

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says "All the people who are shouting about democracy without any practical knowledge of it should read this up-to-date and very readable treatise by an author who really does know what he is writing about."

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by Gideon Clark

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A SWISS NOVEL

ADOLPHE

by Benjamin Constant (1767-1830)

THE difficulty, in thinking about *Adolphe*, is to lay the ghost of Constant. One is listening to Mozart against a disruptive mutter of music hall which has got on to almost the same wavelength. But this happens with all the Romantics; their passionate exaltation of the first person singular aimed at the solitary *cri de coeur* but leaves one with a confusing impression of duet, in which life, with its subversive pair of hands, is vamping in jaunty undertone the unofficial version. Beside the broken heart of the imagined Ellénore, healed at last by death, stands Madame de Staël, in the full real flesh of her obstreperous possessiveness with no sign of mortality on her. She is off to Germany to write a damned good book. And as Adolphe, free at last, contemplates with horror the wilderness of his liberty, up bobs Constant, explanatory about his secret marriage, still hopelessly susceptible, still with a dozen duels before him on account of ladies' faces and with one leg out of the nuptial couch at the thought of the rather acid enticements of Madame Récamier. It is distressing that a man should obtrude so persistently on his own confessions.

One of the earliest psychological novelists, Constant is enmeshed in ambiguity. He is more than the surgeon of the heart; he is more than the poet of masochism. *Adolphe* is not the tragedy of unequal love created out of the comedy of his chronic amorousness: it is the tragedy of the imagination itself and rendered in words as melodiously and mathematically clear as the phrases of a Mozart quartet. One understands as one reads *Adolphe* why the tears streamed down Constant's face and his voice choked when he read the book. But he did weep rather a lot. He went weeping about the Courts of Europe with it—taking his precautions. Would Madame de Staël object to this line? Had he sufficiently toned down the money difficulties? (One would like to write the financial side of *Adolphe*, but that kind of thing was left to the vulgar Balzac.) Had he beaten up his literary omelette so well that none of his wives and mistresses could put out a finger and exclaim, Lo! here. or Lo! there? He was very anxious and very evasive. Never can autobiography—disguised though it was—have emerged from the facts with such a creeping and peeping. There was even a special preface for the English edition, in which, knowing his England, he declared *Adolphe* was a cautionary tale to warn us of the wretchedness of love which tries to live outside the necessary artifices of society. There is a sort of sincerity in this, of course; Constant had the bullied free lover's sneaking regard for marriage as a kind of patent medicine. The dictatorship of Napoleon and the despotism of Madame de Staël had given him a hunger for the constitutional. But for one who thought nobly of the soul he is—well, shall we say, practical?

One looks up from the music of *Adolphe*, from the cool dissertation of that unfaltering violin, to the noble head of his portrait. At Holland House, when they watched him, aware that they were being entertained by one of the chief scandals of exiled Europe, they must have noticed that he had none of the frank charlatanry of the Romantics. A dignified and even debonair forty, he was sensitive, witty and vivacious. The nose suggests firmness and probity. And yet one can understand that Constant was considered a shade tough. One detects the buried outline of the original human monkey under the half smile of the small courtier. In the pose and in the eyes there is something of the mandrill's mask, something of that animal's vanity and temper. So gentle—and yet Ellénore and Madame de Staël, violent themselves, complain of the rasp of his tongue. The mouth is almost beautiful, a talker's mouth caught with the perpetual epigram, but it lifts at the corner with an upward twist of slyness. It hints at the hard malice of the inhibited. One does not altogether trust Constant, even before one has read *Adolphe*. One foresees the danger of a cleverness which is indecisive, the perils of an elusiveness which is captivating but never revealing.

What is lacking in the portrait is any sign of the morbid apathy of his nature. M. Gustav Rudler, the most searching editor of *Adolphe*, says Constant lived in a sort of apathy which "made crises of passion an essential need." A cat and dog life with all those mistresses, duels with young Englishmen—he was still at it in his crippled old age, being carried to the ground to fire from his chair—a wicked senility at the gaming tables. "I leave myself to Chance," Constant wrote. "I go where it puts me and stay there until it sweeps me away again." Brilliant and unrevealing in conversation, he buries his serious opinions which he can contemplate only when he is alone. And then the temperature is so cool that the sensibility is still thwarted and unmelted. He lives listlessly and constrained. This is Byronism once more, the beginning of the malady of the age; but Byronism turned analytical, without the guts, the hocus-pocus. His world weariness has no sense of theatre; it is not so highly coloured; it is the fatigue which makes for the abstract mind and not for poetic journalism, the sickness of the "âmes sèches."

"Je ne puis que vous plaindre," the father of Adolphe writes when he observes that, as he expected, the young man's determination to break with Ellénore is going to weaken. "Je ne puis que vous plaindre de ce qu'avec votre esprit d'indépendance, vous faites toujours ce que vous ne voulez pas." But lovers of independence are like that; the love of liberty is more easily come by than the will to ensure it. Constant was inured to despotism; society conspired with Madame de Staël to reduce his will. Adolphe and Constant together both lament their lack of career. And if one can think of the writer of a masterpiece as a failure, the *âme sèche* of Constant was not the sole or even the chief cause of his disorientation. It is true that Madame de Staël's party was the wrong one to belong to; but it was anyway hopeless for Constant to be a liberal democrat, full of the ideas of the Edinburgh Whigs, under an unconstitutional regime; and one can only sympathise with him when, shut out of public life where he could excel, and kept in the backwaters of scholarship and dalliance by the Napoleonic dictatorship, he should find this backwater dominated by a female of the Napoleonic species. One hesitates, of course, to call any place that Madame de Staël inhabited a backwater. Maelstrom comes nearer to her disposition. "Storm" was his word for her (modified to *bel orage* in *Adolphe*); warming up to "earthquake" and settling finally on "volcano." And not extinct, either, like that crater to which Chateaubriand's René climbed, in a famous passage, to weep for the mere matter of an hour or two. The real Romantics were men of theatrical moments; a borrower like Constant had to endure the years. He was ten years among the explosions of Madame de Staël and even Napoleon, it is said, could not withhold a breath of congratulation when he heard she had gone to Italy where the volcano, as he pointed out, is natural to the scenery.

Constant's own solution was simply liberal constitutionalism. Marriage, he seems to suggest, was devised by society precisely for his kind of malady, i.e., the fatigue of the imagination, the discovery that when you possessed your mistress you did not love her. Cynical—but the idea had been in his mind since he was a boy of 13. He seems to have thought that even Madame the Volcano in full eruption would become amenable after standing at the altar. He was obeying the instinct of the male who, drowning in the passion he has unwittingly roused, seeks to appease the storm by throwing off his life belt.

"Scène épouvantable avec Madame de Stael. J'annonce une rupture decisive. Deuxième scene. Fureur, reconciliation impossible, départ difficile. Il faut me marier."

Départ difficile—that sums up the diminuendo of human love. And even when it was not épouvantable it went on quietly nagging:

"Minette est de mauvaise humeur, parceque je ne veux pas veiller le soir. Il est clair que je serai forcé de me marier pour pouvoir me coucher de bonne heure."

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JONATHAN CAPE THIRTY BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON

Well, he had two good goes at it and marriage was not a success.

Adolphe is the intellectual in love, beginning it all out of *amour propre* and some fashionable imitation, creating love out of his head, rejoicing in the mind's freedom, and horrified to find that the heart lives to be enslaved. The beauty of the book is that the theme is lived and not argued; not indeed lived with the accidental paraphernalia or even the embellishment with which life mercifully obscures fundamental human problems, but with the austere serenity of abstraction. There is a little of the Romantic foliage taken from the literature of the time—the presentiments, the solitary walks, the wintry landscape and some notes in the deathbed scene are *de rigueur*—but he is not lyrical nor does he go back to the urbane generalities of the pure eighteenth century manner. He is something new. The lives of the lovers are singled out like two trees in the winter, their branches articulated in exact and delicate skeleton against a clear and cloudless sky.

He was restless, it was noted. He could not keep still when he was in a room. The imagination is the most quickly wearied of our faculties; it craves for more and more stimulus. After its ecstasies it leaves a void; hollowness and listlessness lie like ashes after it has burned. Presently sentiment rewarms them and the tepid souls like Constant begin to live on the imagination's memories. They are not memories of real things; but a mistress abandoned twenty years ago begins to be clothed in a glamour which, mathematically speaking, is twice the glamour of a mistress abandoned ten years before; and twenty times the attraction of one he happens to be living with at the moment. She, poor wretch, has to deal with him, stark naked. It is a familiar perversity. The oldest of Constant's ladies, now old enough to be his grandmother, seems almost proper for the magic state of marriageability. Alas, he had left it too late. She was dead. How far back would Constant's memories have to go before he hit upon the ultimate and assuaging woman?

At that question, out of malice to all, one wants to transplant him. One always wants to do this with the early liberals. One wants to show them where it was all leading, this exaltation of life, liberty and the pursuit of autobiography. Since that time there has been only one period in which the intellectuals have had it all their own way; when imagination and experiment were to be canonised, where liberty made its last if desiccated whoopee. One leads him into the Bloomsbury of the 'twenties. The Lawrence wave catches him, as Chateaubriand and *Corinne* caught him before. Presently he is thrown among the psycho-analysts. They seize him and one hears (as he describes the ever-enrichening associations of his memory) the inevitable question: "When did you last see your Mother?" He has to confess he cannot remember: it was his father who had bothered him; *she* had died at his birth. And then one hears the shrill, scientific howl as Constant at last hears the cause of his trouble, the seat of that sullen will-lessness. It was the charm of living 130 years ago that the psychological novelists did not have to know what their trouble was.

V. S. PRITCHETT

PLUTOCRACY

Wall Street Under Oath. By FERDINAND PECORA. *Cresset Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

For seventeen months Judge Pecora served as the principal counsel to the famous Senate Committee which investigated the habits of Wall Street during the great depression. His book is, partly, a careful and illuminating summary of the testimony then taken, and, partly also, a series of reflections upon the evidence. It can be said without exaggeration that no more important book on the habits of finance-capital has been published since Mr. Justice Brandeis wrote his classic *Other People's Money* nearly a generation ago. It is not merely important for the revelations which Mr. Pecora extracted by skilful cross-examination from witnesses who were the leaders of American finance. It is not merely important, either, for the remarkable instances of organised dishonesty for which many of them, trusted to occupy vital fiduciary positions, were compelled to admit themselves responsible.

Far more important than either of these are the revelation of the immense empire these men wielded, and the absence of any effective check upon their domination. They held the United States in their hands. And, as their testimony shows, they not only thought that perfectly natural; it never occurred to them that it was rationally possible to object to the fact of their almost unlimited power. Their end was money; their methods were the cultivation of important friends, the rigging of the market, the organisation of interlocking directorates, the making of pools. They evaded the income tax laws without even a blush; they lived on vast incomes and were astonished at themselves for not taking more. They "milked" the industries they controlled, railways or public utilities, of enormous sums, which never represented real capital assets of any kind. They bought and sold governments and political parties without any sense that this was other than the normal practice of their enterprise. Generous in their private lives, donors to universities, museums, charities, they were the models whom the common citizens of the United States were bidden to emulate. If they came to Europe, they consorted with kings and prime ministers and princes of the Church. In America, from Harding to Hoover, they made the White House an annexe to their own places of business. Reading their testimony, it is clear that they no more doubted their divine right to rule than Bourbon or Romanoff. If they exercised their authority by different means, it was, with the greatest of them, that kind of authority. They corrupted the press. They made the legal profession their servile instrument. They had their lobbies in Washington and the capital of every state of the Union, granted only that it paid to keep a lobby there. Mr. Pecora throws a blinding light upon the whole scene. It is so fantastic, that if the admissions did not come from the leading actors themselves, it would be difficult to believe that it could be true.

Some curb upon these practices has been introduced by the New Deal. It has been bitterly fought by most of the men whom Mr. Pecora here analyses; some of them, indeed, or their subordinates, have actually got into the United States Treasury Department in recent months. Mr. Pecora rightly doubts whether there is any evidence that they have changed their attitude. It is more probable that they are waiting for the end of President Roosevelt's term to see whether they cannot find a new man for the White House ready to help them to go back to the good old days. They retain a sense of injured innocence, a conviction of high integrity, like nothing so much as the attitude of the Bourbons in exile. America has not heard the last of them yet. That is why Mr. Robert Jackson, the Solicitor-General for the United States, could say recently that, whatever might be the future of Mr. Roosevelt, a third term was emphatically needed for the New Deal.

HAROLD J. LASKI

WARFARE AND SOCIETY

Warfare: The Relation of War to Society. By LUDWIG RENN. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This is the work of an expert soldier. It would not be thought to be the work of an expert writer, if we did not know from previous books that Renn can write extremely well.

It is an encyclopedia, though not arranged as such, covering a great number of subjects: war aims, war economy, strategy, tactics, propaganda, military training. Its value is partly in this comprehensiveness, the effort Renn has made to see war throughout history in relation to varying forms of social structure. Its weakness is the disjointed snap-skip-and-jump nature of his argument; the book resembles a crammer's crowded text-book. It has no fewer than 108 headings and sub-headings. And under almost any one of these headings can be found either a number of views stated brusquely but almost without argument, or an historical summary that compresses all the history of that aspect of warfare into a few pages.

Thus the section headed "Free and pressed men," covering three pages, begins: "In classical days armies were composed almost entirely of free men, and navies used slaves only at the oars. This made armies comparatively small." If one has to summarise, in two sentences, six or eight hundred years of warfare, such a generalisation is not worse than others. But it covers up the reality that matters. In "classical days," at Marathon and Thermopylae for example, tiny armies of men relatively free held up much larger armies of men relatively unfree. Our civilisation in part derives from that fact. So does much of the history of warfare.

The superiority in battle of men relatively free over enslaved

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or half-enslaved opponents, then established, made it necessary for the Roman Empire to maintain, as long as it could, a class of free citizens. This superiority also later made possible the victories of Parliamentary armies in England, revolutionary armies in America and France, and so helped to establish capitalist democracy. Yet the Parliament's New Model army consisted mainly of pressed men: Washington's troops had to cease to be a free militia and become in part a regular or "mercenary" army before they were successful; the armies of the French Revolution were conscripted levies. They felt free; freedom was in them—that was the main difference between them and their opponents. Such contradictions and apparent paradoxes cannot be untangled in a few brief sentences, in an argument that jumps from the Roman Empire to the Crimean War, back to Frederick the Great, sweeps forward to Fascism and compares it to the Roman Imperial system, and ends up—all within the same three pages—with child slavery in Japan.

The last sentence of this tour of the world can be quoted as a sample of the hasty writing, or editing, or translation, that makes the book hard to read:

"The sale of children is also an everyday affair in Japan, so that in some parts of the world we can see that literal slavery is already a fact." Already?

Yet in spite of these faults, and partly because of its attempt to crowd everything in, this book has immense value for the serious democrat who, faced with war, wishes to find his way among the many features of to-day that seem to some incomprehensible. The section on "The Practical Conduct of Warfare," which includes more than half the book and goes through the strategy and tactics of the past and to-day, with sixty pages devoted to the tactics of auxiliary arms (including tanks), is a brilliant summary of wide reading and of Renn's own experience as an infantry commander in the German army of 1914–18 and the Spanish Republican army of 1936–38.

Things that might seem to the civilian arbitrary and accidental—the development of trench warfare, the ways in which infantry have in the past checked tanks, the growth of immense fortified lines such as the Maginot Line—are here shown in relation to their causes and their effects on battle. Nowhere else, in the mass of books on war written for soldiers or for the general public, is there anything like as much enlightenment for the average man.

When free peoples—there have been such peoples in the past, and such peoples may show their fighting powers again in the future—are engaged in warfare, they tend to believe that they know something about the general outlines of warfare, including its strategy and tactics. They do not "leave it all to them that knows." They do not accept the assumption made by all second-rate professional soldiers and a few first-rate ones, that war is a craft or mystery so secret and so hard to learn that only the professional can speak and take decisions on it with sufficient knowledge of the facts that matter. Free peoples do not leave the making or unmaking of their wars to soldiers only, any more than they leave the making and unmaking of their laws to lawyers only. They make themselves felt in the matter.

This to-day can only be done if those who are free, or hope to make themselves and their fellow-countrymen free, acquire an outline knowledge of warfare. I know no other single book that can give them so much of that outline. TOM WINTRINGHAM

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MISS AUSTEN

Jane Austen and Her Art. By MARY LASCELLES. *Oxford.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

I read *Jane Austen And Her Art* with some care, and, being pretty well acquainted with the works, I have no excuse for not understanding it. So I should find it easy to describe; yet my impression of the book as a whole is strangely vague and unsatisfying. The author meant to bring light. Former critics, she observes, have worked on too small a scale; they have stopped short just at the interesting moment; they shirk the "exciting how and why of analysis." She quotes them, on purpose to continue where they leave off. And after all it is the quotations that are illuminating.

Yet she ought to have written a delightful book—delightful, that is, to anyone with a proper view of the subject. For one thing, she can really add to our knowledge. She has taken pains to read everything Jane Austen must have read: everything that may have helped to form her style, or her notions of life and art. On this ground "exciting hows and whys" are uncalled for. The Johnson influence: the borrowings from Cowper: the young lady Catherine Morland was so regrettably unlike ("Of every useful and ornamental feminine employment Emmeline had long since made herself mistress without any instruction")—Miss Lascelles has only to point them out, and there is immediate pleasure in recognising them. Besides, she is intelligently passive; she reads the novels as they were written. One can't always say the same even of their devout admirers. Yet very little comes through, except a point here and there, and a sense of unfulfilled design.

The points are often sound, and always worth arguing. I believe she is the first critic to note the transformation of Mrs. Jennings; she says the novelist "wrote herself into a good humour." That's excellent; but then she tries to prove that Marianne was familiar with the dark side of Cowper's life—because if so, the "vehemence" of her praise ("those beautiful lines which have frequently driven me almost wild") would be "much more natural." Surely there is a triple blunder in this. It ignores the fact that Cowper was exciting in his own day: and that Marianne is intended to be comic: and, worst of all, that if the passage were really an allusion to that dark side, it would be in shocking taste. There is such a thing as *trop de zèle*.

More happily, she observes the waste of Mrs. Clay, and suggests why the Clay-Elliot intrigue is barely sketched in. Their "mutual seduction" would be comic—diamond cut diamond; but when it came to the point, Jane Austen was not prepared to exhibit any form of vice as a joke. Which brings us to her treatment of sexual irregularity in the other books. According to Miss Lascelles, she "closed her mind against it" from first to last. Willoughby's seduction of Eliza is quite unreal. Lydia's flight is real before and after it occurs, but the central fact is "unimagined." In *Mansfield Park*, the author hides behind Fanny; "that Fanny Price should close *her* imaginative consciousness against Maria's experience—this was to be expected." But Fanny's "numb resistance to realisation" has "overtones" which are clearly heard in the famous refusal to "dwell on guilt and misery." It was hard to manage this affair at all. "The violent act which precipitates the catastrophe . . . is not essentially comic; nor can it be made to appear so, without breach of the author's moral purpose." And, being now much older than the girl who devised

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First Impressions, she "cannot even slip back into the comic world with youthful inconsequence" after the elopement has taken place.

I should call that much too simple, and a good deal of it is almost silly. No one will pretend Eliza exists. But as for Lydia's flight—we know everything about it; *this* elopement is not so much a fall from decency as a triumph of inconsiderateness. We are told that it is not comic; but we know better, and Jane Austen felt the same—she begins to treat it as comic even before Lydia has been made an honest woman. Only it was beyond her genius to avoid a degree of humbug; for morals are morals, and what she felt as an artist, she felt herself obliged to contradict as a Christian lady. (There would have been the same trouble with Mrs. Clay.) *Mansfield Park* did not require that sort of humbug. Far from being "essentially comic," Maria's flight is not comic at all; and once again, we know everything about it. The "guilt and misery" are completely imagined, though they are compressed within a few lines; and it would have been impossible to "dwell" on them without writing a different book altogether. At the same time, they are by no means an intrusion in a comic world. For *Mansfield Park* is a comedy only in the sense that it is not tragic, and we should feel cheated if the end were less grave.

Still, I don't deny that when she gets on "odious subjects," we are apt to lose contact, and to wriggle. Her point of view is not ours, and it is to blame for the most dislikeable words she ever wrote. "Mrs. Norris, whose attachment seemed to augment with the demerits of her niece . . ." What could be more horribly spinsterish?

With all this, I am no nearer an account of Miss Lascelles' work. My objection to it is the style. It looks and reads like a "thesis"; it has a row of notes on every page, and diction to match. Here is another sample:

> Exactness of symmetry such as this carries with it one danger. The novelist's subtlety of apprehension may be numbed by this other faculty of his for imposing order on what he apprehends. His apprehension of human relationships, for example, may fail to develop or, if it develops, fail to find due expression because he is impelled to simplify these relationships in his story in the interests of its pattern.

In trying to excel the critics who approach their work as an art, Miss Lascelles has thrown art to the winds. Yet there should be some harmony between the theme and the way of writing. Jane Austen demands a clear and shapely prose; one would like to speak of her in a manner she would enjoy. And there is nothing in this book too profound to have been said gracefully.

K. JOHN

DEATH OF AN INTELLECTUAL

David Guest: A Memoir. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 6s.

A Text Book of Dialectical Materialism. By DAVID GUEST. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 2s.

David Guest was killed at the age of twenty-seven fighting for the Spanish Republic. This memoir, compiled by his mother with the help of his closest friends, has become, since the outbreak of war, more than a personal document; for Guest was a Communist and, in an introduction, Harry Pollitt wrote:

> If one thing has been proved since 1933, it is that, if Fascism had not been resisted, it would to-day be riding rough-shod over the world. The Austrians were right to resist in February 1934. The Abyssinians were right to resist in 1935. And the Spaniards were right in that their resistance to Fascism was the most prolonged and glorious of all.

In these words Harry Pollitt summed up the motives of those hundreds of Englishmen who joined the International Brigade. Though many of them, like David Guest, were Communists, they went to Spain not on orders from Moscow but because they saw that each bloodless victory over a small country narrowed the frontiers of freedom and brought nearer the clash between the great Powers. They fought—vainly as it turned out—to prevent all their countrymen being involved in war. If David Guest had lived, it is difficult to see how he could have avoided the fate of Harry Pollitt. He too might have felt some repugnance, after encouraging small countries to fight, at pulling out when our own turn came.

But one cannot be sure even of this. For David Guest was one of those whose conversion to Communism was far more than the acceptance of a theory or submission to the discipline of a political party. A charming and precocious child, he suffered agonies of

boredom and humiliation both at his Preparatory School and at Oundle. Here he is as a small boy, not yet nine :

> This morning, Tuesday, I have not really been asleep since four o'clock. I feel dog tired. How I would like to go to sleep again! It is dark in the room. So much so that it might almost be midnight, for the light outside in the passage is considerably greater than the daylight coming through the window. . . A few more minutes and then the bell will go. Most of the boys around me are like me also tired and hugging themselves to get what warmth they can. The bell goes, that harsh, cruel, relentless sound.

Guest was that very rare thing, a true intellectual. He hated school partly because the lessons were so silly and soon found that practical engineering was as detestable as classics. Forced by ill-health to have a term off in Switzerland, when he was twelve, he spent a few months studying with a brilliant French scientist, a fellow patient, and was really happy. Unfortunately the improvement in his health justified his return to Oundle, where he was bound to be an oddity—and suffer for it.

Cambridge gave him his first real chance. Relieved from the ghastly boredom of cricket, he could argue with Wittgenstein and listen to Moore. He could also suffer those agonies of soul which are peculiar to adolescence :

> I am haunted by the ugliness and vulgarity of our modern civilisation, discouraged from work by a sense of futility and wretchedness and a fear, utterly damping to creative work, that whatever I do will be destroyed. . . . I only wish I was not troubled by ethics or religion, call it what you will. But I cannot help feeling that the ordinary agnostic position is a very unsatisfactory one. And yet by no stroke of imagination can I think myself as being brought to believe any traditional religion. The desire for truth is my strongest impulse.

Here are no unusual growing pains. Before 1914 they would have led him to *Sinister Street*, in the early 1920's to *Crome Yellow*. But Guest went to Cambridge in 1929 and to Göttingen in 1930. There he was plunged into student politics, was arrested and imprisoned for taking part in an anti-Nazi demonstration. He returned to England a Communist in the winter of 1931. Caught at its most plastic and malleable phase, his mind, which had always inclined to abstract thought, was fixed in a rigid Marxist mould, and his spirit, unsatisfied by academics, found romance in " the working-class movement." Student meetings, anti-war processions, hunger-marches, Hyde-Park demonstrations—the boy, who suffered isolation and boredom at school, suddenly found " reality " : the intellectual, who could not be an agnostic, a creed. To the decisive discontent of youth, Marxist dogma gave sacrificial discipline—the rough texture of the monk's hair-shirt. To the sensitive intellectual there was an ecstasy of self-immolation in selling the *Daily Worker*, washing up for the hunger-marchers, shouting slogans on the market place :

> A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgery divine ;
> Who sweeps a room as for thy laws
> Makes that and the action fine.

George Herbert wrote as a Christian. David Guest would have echoed the sentiments in the name of the Proletariat.

Self-abnegation is a virtue if it does not destroy personality. Perhaps this memoir to David Guest does not do him justice, but it certainly gives the impression of arrested development :

> I cannot understand how you can maintain that historical materialism or rather history conceived as a succession of class-conflicts whose root lies ultimately in the contradiction between developing production forces and social relations, is not a science. The Bourgeoisie have always denied this and above all denied the very possibility of a proletarian revolution. . . . In regard to the relation of dialectical materialism to philosophy, I must repeat that the laws of dialectics are derived *materialistically*. . . . *There is no other way (speculative or otherwise) of getting knowledge*, etc., etc.

So Guest wrote to a student doing a correspondence course through Marx house. Both in the few published essays and in his Marxist text-book his individuality is suppressed, and his natural style stifled in the Procrustean bed of crude Leninism. The Catholic discipline leaves elbow space for individual taste and intellectual subtlety : but the neophyte Communist must imitate the crudities of *Empirio-Criticism* or be damned.

Guest remained a Communist until he died. Whether organising the Communist youth in Battersea or lecturing on mathematics in Southampton University, he championed the Popular Front and the defence of democracy until the moment came when he felt the call to Spain. There he could unify theory and practice in the battle-line, where commands must be obeyed and the enquiring mind is stilled. He was killed very soon.

The tragedy of the intellectual, who escapes either, like Aldous

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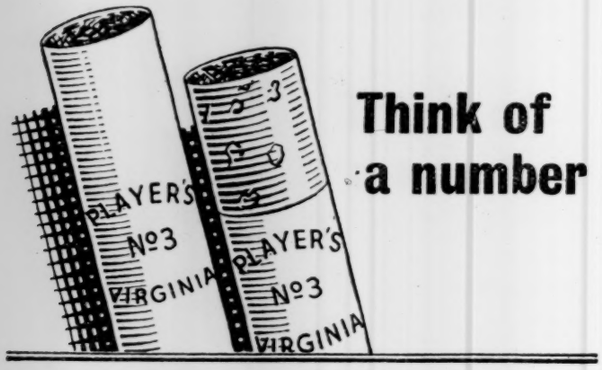
Sanda Mala. By MAURICE COLLIS. *Faber.* 7s. 6d.
I Spy! By MAURICE JONES. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.
Life as Carola. By JOAN GRANT. *Methuen.* 10s. 6d.

The British in India have had a rough time in fiction; they are usually presented either as figures of fun or as noble teuto-blond dummies like the people in the Du Maurier drawings in *Punch*. The issue is largely a political one; if you believe in Imperialism you've got to believe in a fine man doing a difficult job. But the intelligentsia's attitude is a legacy from the happy days of early Fabianism when people saw issues plain; the petty nationalist movements in the colonies were thought to be part of the forward movement of labour throughout the world. The Socialists of the West, struggling for nationalisation of public utilities, the regulation of hours and wages, free speech and untrammelled justice, hailed as their allies their dark brothers who were fighting for the re-establishment of their absolute rulers and for their ancient rights to dump ordure in the middle of the street and to bury the mothers of twins alive. In consequence the engineers and civil servants who gave India superb irrigation schemes which have largely freed her from the constant threat of famine, a public health service which has done much to conquer the endemic plagues which debilitated the people, and the communications which make it possible to imagine her as a State, were tarred with the same brush as the most determined enemies of social progress at home. The innocent and ill-educated young man who enters Government service in India because it looks as if it were going to be an interesting job is put into the same category as the slum landlord, the label *Anglo-Indian* is slapped on to him and he ceases to exist as a human being. His difficulties are enormous; his education has taught him of India as part of a royal dowry and the prize of eighteenth-century wars; it probably did not take him beyond the Mutiny. His instruction in the present-day state of affairs will probably be limited to advice from seniors who know the ropes; a barrier of Indian hostility will prevent him from coming to know much more than the ropes. Bleak as his situation is, it remains preferable to the situation of the women who are sent out there with an even worse education and no day's work to pass the time. And if the life as a life were not sufficiently intolerable there is a climate which might have been designed to fray European nerves. It is only fair to recognise these people as the profoundly unhappy creatures they are and to allow them the same humanity that we grant to those with whose problems we are more familiar. To say that *Not at Home* is written with sympathy and understanding for the Indian Army wives and to add that its author has obviously experience of Indian Army life is probably to condemn it out of hand. It is, whether or not one would wish to live in its setting and know its characters, an interesting and amusing novel. The descriptive writing is good, but it is in dialogue that this new author excels; the nuances of the clique slang—it is an uneasy marriage of the old Army talk and the faded smarty talk of those splendid years when Mr. Coward was known as The Master—are brilliantly handled, and the distinction is nicely drawn between its use by the older people who are being rather daring and up to date and its use by the young characters who think it is the English language.

Mr. Collis's new book is a fairy story in a Burmese setting. The penniless artist is talking to friends in the gallery where his pictures are on exhibition and a stranger comes in, takes a look at the pictures and says would you like to go out to Burma, first-class passage paid, living expenses for six months and do three portraits for about a hundred pounds each? And when he gets out there what should he find but a beautiful princess, and what should she do but fall in love with him, and what should happen but a fatal motor accident making the artist Lord Cashel, and what more could a Lord or anyone else want than to live happy ever after with a Princess with ten thousand a year? This light and readable story is ideal escape reading; it has something of the virtue which belongs to Lord Dunsany's best work—the creation of a still, golden atmosphere in which magic seems as probable as tramways. If it has a defect it is in the stress placed on the Irish charm of the Burmese. The phrase "The Irish of the East" has already done enough harm; the Burmese have taken to the bomb, the automatic, and the hooligan band as substitutes for political demonstrations, and their ideal of a quiet discussion seems to have been founded on the scene in the Committee Room when lovable old Tim Healy thought fit to speak of Kitty O'Shea's petticoat. It will be another stage in the degradation of a pleasant people when they learn to be winsome about their own powerlessness and industrious quarrelsomeness. Still, this thought may perhaps be dismissed as an intrusion from the real world with which *Sanda Mala* is very little concerned.

I Spy! is an entertaining lark, a secret service farce. The jokes are good in a very English way; they have a good deal in common with the very funny drawings by Pont which appear in *Punch*, and if you like them you should enjoy this also. The plot is concerned with the adventures of a girl who knows a secret and who is chased by eight spies round Europe and back home into a rummage sale in England. Even if you don't think the jokes are funny, the book will probably get by as a thriller, a painless time-killer.

Messrs. Methuen rather unwisely print a challenge to the reader on the dust jacket of *Life as Carola*. "We leave the reader to form his own judgment as to how this book, crowded with incident and detail beyond the reach either of imagination or research, came to be written." The book is a companion to a novel called *Winged Pharaoh* and a similar suggestion is made about it, which is that the book may have been written not by Miss Joan Grant but by an elderly spirit which has been occupying various bodies throughout human history. *Winged Pharaoh* was its windy vapouring about an epoch of pre-Ptolemaic Egypt which no Egyptologist could identify. Few people read Egyptian history for their amusement; there is no popular literature to read: the spirit had a clear field and romped on it. The book



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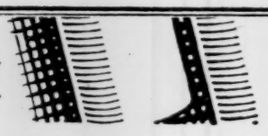

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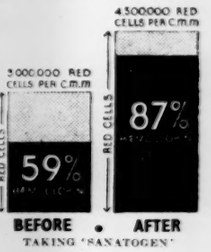

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possessed too the tense sincerity which sweeps away all doubt. The spirit is now at it again, as sincere and urgent as ever. But this time the story begins with the flat remark that "I was born early in the morning of the fourth of May, in the year of Our Lord fifteen hundred and ten." The event takes place in the neighbourhood of Perugia. We know where we are, three years from the time when Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici was able to cry "*Questo mi da piacere, che la mia tiara!*" Such a wealth of contemporary writing is open to us that we know almost as well what these people thought as what they said. Carola is the daughter of a noble who is turned out of the house at seven years of age and who grows to puberty with a travelling band of dwarf, whore, and strong man. In this hard school she learns to speak in the authentic voice of Renaissance Italy: "I thought Bernard was the nicest man I had ever met," and (to a smallpox patient) "Lucia, you must not scratch off your scabs. I know it is so much more difficult to bear than any pain, but you *must* be brave, Lucia, or you will be scarred." And Carola sees a witch burnt, who cries as the flames mount "Don't. Don't, *please* don't." Whether the spirit or Miss Grant is responsible, one feels that the Renaissance is being seen darkly through a West Kensington glass. On matters of fact the book is richly spurious, to take only one point we are treated to that old fudge about nuns being bricked up alive after torture. One can't believe in a spirit which swallows that fatuous Gothick invention: a mind which has been maturing for two thousand years and more has no business to be taken in by such twaddle. If one examines the pot stew carefully it becomes plain what it is, the detail and the incident which are specifically Italian seem to be random accretions from books like *The Cloister and the Hearth* with fainter echoes of the *Decameron* and perhaps a little history. But there is a large proportion of incident which one recognises as stock elements in phantasy in its psychological sense. Little girls who are branded with red-hot irons by their fathers, virgins who remain pure in brothels, women beaten by other women over the breasts, desireless old men who marry lovely girls and allow them to lie with their Apollo-like sons, these phantoms are familiar to students of the neuroses. All of them appearing in this one story may help to explain "how this book came to be written."

It is at least akin to the half-dreamed reverie, the phantasy which can so easily acquire psychic reality giving it a greater weight than experience itself—in a simpler form it often brings innocent dentists and doctors into the police courts.

ANTHONY WEST

Let the Record Speak. By DOROTHY THOMPSON. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The High Cost of Hitler. By JOHN GUNTHER. *Hamish Hamilton.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

We may laugh at astrologers, but the success enjoyed by Mme. Tabouis or *The Week* shows that soothsaying is an indispensable part of the international journalist's equipment. Miss Dorothy Thompson, in this collection of her weekly commentaries on world affairs for the New York *Herald Tribune*, scores heavily with a prophecy written before Hitler had even invaded Austria: "Write it down. On Saturday, February 12th, 1938 (Schuschnigg summoned to Berchtesgaden) . . . Nazi-ism started on the march across all Europe East of the Rhine. Write it down that the world revolution began in earnest—and perhaps the world war." Besides good prophecy and good commentary, Miss Thompson evinces a real faith in liberal democracy which she believes to be threatened in America as much as in England by the rise of Fascism. But those who are impatient with American hesitations should read this book to discover what our behaviour in the last few years looks like to a wide section of American opinion.

The High Cost of Hitler is a collection of broadcasts which Mr. Gunther, one of the most widely read reporters on both sides of the Atlantic, gave to America during the crisis preceding this war. The story is dramatic and Mr. Gunther, as one would expect, tells it vividly.

Victorian Snapshots. By PAUL MARTIN. *Country Life.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Martin, who was born in the early 'sixties, was apprenticed, when he left school, to a wood engraver. Until the end of the century photographs for magazines were usually reproduced by wood engravings, and in this way the young Martin became interested in the camera. Where photographers who thought themselves "artistic" took pains to produce prints reminiscent of the fashionable Royal Academy pictures, Mr. Martin was chiefly concerned with photographs of daily life, and he often used a camera disguised as a parcel, so that his subjects were unaware of being immortalised. His book of reminiscences will interest the historians of photography, and the large number of illustrations, mostly from the author's snapshots, are most curious and fascinating. Here is the London of the 'eighties and 'nineties, tall hats, hansoms, cab accidents, bearded policemen, horse-drawn fire-engines. Here, too, is country life, phaetons, archery, croquet, haymaking in pork-pie hats, Boulter's Lock, bloomers, shoots, meets, bathing scenes, motor-car breakdowns, camping holidays. Mr. Martin has an extraordinary eye for the composition of a photograph, and many of his snapshots would make admirable subjects for Mr. Sickert. The gorgeous four-in-hand, the high-perched flower-laden hat, the beflagged houseboat will excite a pleasing nostalgia in the elderly, while the contrast between the feathered inconveniently overdressed children of the rich and the half-clad children of the poor serves to remind us that the Victorian age, however picturesque it may now seem, entailed preposterous suffering for all classes. An amusing, enjoyable and instructive book.

We regret that in our issue of October 14th F. L. Lucas's *A Greek Garland* was attributed to the Cambridge Press 2*s.* 6*d.* This should have been Oxford Press, 5*s.*

BOOKS TO COME

Mrs. Woolf has a few words to add to her distinguished essay on criticism, "How it Strikes a Contemporary." In a Hogarth sixpenny pamphlet, *Reviewing*, to be published on November 2nd, she gives her reasons for believing that the original function of the reviewer can no longer be adequately performed in the modern press and makes a suggestion for abolishing him and dividing his function between two separate kinds of practitioner. In a note, Mr. Leonard Woolf expresses a somewhat different view of the problem.

The Hogarth Press holds the opinion that the young poet of to-day encounters unfair difficulty in publishing and inducing the public to read his work. Consequently they have undertaken the task of publishing volumes from time to time containing a selection of works by young poets which have not previously appeared in book form. The first of these selections in the "Poets of To-morrow" series appears on November 2nd and consists of work by R. P. Hewett, H. B. Mallalieu, Ruthven Todd and Robert Waller. On the same day, the Hogarth Press publishes Herbert Rosinki's *The German Army* and another volume of *New Writing*.

In *Prelude to Victory*, due from Cape on November 3rd, General Spears has written a successor to *Liaison*, 1914. It deals with the first four months of 1917 in France—the period of the Nivelle offensive—when General Spears was liaison officer between the French and British armies. His subject matter is the drama of the whole disastrous adventure: there are portraits of the generals and politicians involved, and an evocation of the atmosphere of the French Army at the time. Winston Churchill contributes an introduction.

Professor E. H. Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919–1939* (Macmillan, November 7th) is described as an introduction to the study of international relations. In his diagnosis of the underlying causes of the crisis Professor Carr argues that the failure of the League of Nations is the result of the attempt to apply the principles of nineteenth-century *laissez-faire* to the fundamentally altered conditions of the twentieth century.

Hans Habe, the author of *Three Across the Frontier*, is now Volunteer No. 692 in the French Foreign Legion. He is a strongly anti-Nazi Hungarian, whose home was in Switzerland and whose deep disgust at the Munich Agreement and its consequences led him to join up with the democracies as soon as war broke out. Just before he left for Paris, Habe had completed his new novel, *Sixteen Days*, which deals with the "Munich fortnight" of 1938 and will be published by Harrap on November 2nd.

The Story of the Winged-S, coming from Hale on November 6th, is the autobiography of Igor I. Sikorsky, the man to whom the great Clipper 'planes owe their existence. The story starts with the tiny S-1 which could make only small jumps a few feet high and ends with the huge S-42 Clippers of the Pan-American Airways.

What should be a vivid and illuminating series of essays on Balkan politics is gathered together in *Hitler's Route to Bagdad*, due from Allen and Unwin on November 7th. A group of authors who know their subjects discuss the problems of Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey. There are an introduction by Leonard Woolf and maps by J. F. Horrabin.

Colonel Casado's *Last Days of Madrid* comes from Peter Davies on November 6th. Colonel Casado, who was personally responsible for the surrender of the capital to General Franco, describes how and why he overthrew the Negrin Government. His personal apologia is preceded by an outline of the whole Spanish war and a detailed account of the fall of Barcelona.

The Man Who Took Trains, by John Grane, is due from Hamish Hamilton on November 3rd. It is a first novel dealing with the nightmare of frenzied journeying into which a Jew escaping from pre-war Nazi Germany was plunged. The author is himself a refugee.

An important book coming from this firm on November 6th is *Can America Stay Neutral*, by Allen W. Dulles (who was legal adviser to the American delegation at the Three Power Naval Conference and the Disarmament Conference) and Hamilton Fish Armstrong, editor of

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the American *Foreign Affairs*. The authors state the pros and cons of all the devices for keeping America neutral.

Mr. Osbert Lancaster set himself the horrible task of showing how the houses which he displayed to us so wittily in *Pillar to Post* are decorated inside. The result, *Homes Sweet Homes*, will be published by Murray early in November.

Hodder and Stoughton announce for publication very shortly *A History of the Second Great War*, by Commander Stephen King-Hall, which will be published in monthly volumes, price 2*s*. each. Volume 1 will deal with "The Cause of the War." A comparable history of the last war was written monthly by John Buchan in the same way.

What does the author of *Uncommon Sense About War* really stand for? What is he after? These are the questions which Mr. Maurice Colbourne attempts to answer in *The Real Bernard Shaw*, coming from Dent on November 9th. Mr. Colbourne, who has produced many of the plays and lectured on them at Malvern and in the United States, thinks Shaw is misunderstood because he has written too much. Hence this Shavian text-book which is designed to save the reader time and money by distilling four or five million words into some sixty thousand.

For November 1st, Dakers announce a new novel by Georg Kaiser, *A Villa in Sicily*, which has been highly praised by Thomas Mann.

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

OWING to the confusion produced by the outbreak of hostilities and the sudden departure for the wars of my far abler colleague, Mr. Desmond Shawe-Taylor, the reviewing of records in these columns was unavoidably held up, so that some of the sets I am about to discuss date back as far as August.

Rather late in the day, then, I bring praise of a new recording of Brahms's *Fourth Symphony*, by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Victor de Sabata (Decca). Brahms's symphonies are a curious case. Away from them I find myself thinking with distaste of the ill balance of their movements, the stodginess of the orchestration, the inspissated Teutonism of the emotion. But in performance I am invariably carried away—as I believe most people are—by the invention, the musicianship, the rich magnificence. The *Fourth Symphony*, in particular, is the acme of all these qualities—a huge work of very sinister power. Let us forget, if we can, the absurd perversion of *Choreartium*, with its vulgar Scherzo and Danilova capering about with a satin tambourine on the side of her head, and give ourselves up to the sheer unfaltering sequence of musical composition. There is not a moment's weakness or padding in the whole work; the material fits together as if by magic; and through it all one can hear the inexorable searching of the German soul. If we listen thus to a passage like the second subject of the slow movement, we may realise the force we are up against, in the present war. The performance and recording are remarkably fine and fierce: the timbre of each instrument is always clearly distinguishable and the *tempi* seem to me impeccable. A slight coarseness may not be so perceptible on some gramophones as on others. Another recent, though not quite new, recording is that of Vaughan Williams's *Concerto Accademico* for violin and string orchestra, played by Frederick Grinke and the Boyd Neel ensemble (Decca). This is an essay in the composer's most intransigent modal style, written (most of it) at the height of his middle period. It has, therefore, a certain monotony of theme and texture, but the writing is exquisite and there are many attractive pages, especially in the slow movement and towards the end of the Finale. The performance could hardly be better. I am glad to be able to say the same of Sir Thomas Beecham's latest production, Mozart's *Haffner Symphony* (Col.). Toscanini's recording, though excellent at the time, has long been out of date and there must be many people who will welcome a new set of this gracious and happy work. It is interesting to note Beethoven-like touches—especially in the development of the first movement—most unusual in Mozart. The recording is without the startling brilliance of most of Beecham's gramophonic achievements, but the London Philharmonic does full justice to its power of *cantabile* playing. An *Andante and Rondo* (Col.) from a *Trumpet Concerto* by Haydn is a fascinating contribution. I wish George Eskdale and Walter Goehr (who conducts) had been able to give us the whole work. The music is Haydn at his best, and I find it hard to believe that the first movement is not up to the standard of the others. Let me implore those concerned to let us have the completing record without delay. The solo part is most beautifully and sensitively played, but in the *Andante* it inevitably sounds too loud, the melody appearing floodlit, as it were. The London Philharmonic Orchestra, under Antal Dorati, offer the Boccherini-Françaix ballet, *Scuola di Ballo*, on two records (Col.). This is the kind of charming, light eighteenth-century stuff of which the Russian Ballet has popularised so much since the last war. The modernised orchestration adds pep, but subtracts native refinement. The whole thing is amusing and exhilarating and on the same plane as Walton's *Façade* (Col.), of which the Orchestre Raymonde gives four movements (Polka, Tango, Popular Song, and Tarantella). The arrangement, by Walter Goehr, takes out the acid and substitutes molasses, and the playing is very slick; but I prefer the more authentic version produced some time ago by H.M.V. and conducted by the composer. The latter recording is by no means out of date.

Léon Goossens and Gerald Moore record a very seldom-heard work, Schumann's *Three Romances* for oboe and piano (Col.). These are pretty Victoriana, more reminiscent of Mendelssohn than of Schumann. They are late works and do not show a spark of the composer's early genius; yet they are undeniably pretty and very well played. On the fourth side is a harmless *Pièce* by César Franck. Fortunately, Schumann is also represented at his full height this month by a superb recording of *Carnaval* by the Chilean pianist, Claudio Arrau (Parl.). I should call this performance ideal, were it not that "Chiarina" is played with much too savage an accent: the dotted notes appear double-dotted and the total effect is trivialised. On the other hand, I have never heard movements like "Eusebius" and "Reconnaissance" more exquisitely expressed. Beauty of expression is equally the feature of another new record—Egon Petri's inimitable delivery of Liszt's *Ricordanza Etude* (Col.). This piece is perhaps not Liszt at his best: the theme is weak and sugary and fantastically overweighted with decoration—like Sarah Bernhardt late in life playing the Empress Theodora. But there are moments of real warmth and tenderness—the last page is lovely—and so delicate is the rendering by this greatest of living pianists that one's impression of the whole is extraordinarily satisfying. The elaborate passage-work is run off the fingers with such absolute ease and balance that all feeling of vulgarity is smoothed away.

Finally, three Chopin recordings. First I ought to mention Brailowsky's set of the *Sonata in B minor* (H.M.V.) issued last August. This is a triumph of piano recording and the work is perhaps the largest, finest and most serious that Chopin ever wrote. Brailowsky's performance is good, but I cannot find it in me to praise it as wholeheartedly as most critics have done. The *rubato*—so vital in Chopin playing—seems to me frequently overdone in the interests of impressiveness, and the *Largo* is taken *Adagio*, which for me ruins its gravity. But the famous Finale gallops and scintillates magnificently. The *Impromptu in F sharp* (Parl.) is a very different affair—an extended and rather elaborate piece in nocturne form which displays all the resources of the piano, while giving far more opportunity for subtlety of phrasing than, for instance, the *Ricordanza*, to whose world it in general belongs. Lili Kraus plays it with the distinction we have learnt to expect of her. On the obverse is the heartrending little *Prelude in E minor, No. 4*, no less beautifully played. More important in every sense is the album of *Mazurkas* played by Arthur Rubinstein (H.M.V.). About half of the entire collection is contained in this first volume, but several of the best are still to come. It is difficult to speak in measured terms of these records, which seem to me in some respects the most perfect ever made, both in performance and recording. These small masterpieces contain the essence of Chopin's genius, compressed into a form as perfect and as supple as a miracle of jewelry. Each one is in fact a kind of microcosm into which an incredible range of emotions is packed; high spirits are articulated with nostalgia and sadness, like the hinges of a bracelet. The dance rhythm, in the more melancholy numbers, is broken up so fine as to be all but imperceptible, yet ready to gather again into strictness at a moment's notice, if the mood changes. Such pieces are the purest of lyric flights, comparable only to Schubert's songs or, perhaps, to some of those short lyrical poems (e.g. "O western wind, when wilt thou blow") in which our own language is so rich. Perfect examples are the Mazurkas in *F minor op. 7*, in *C minor op. 30*, in *A minor op. 17*, and above all that in *A flat op. 17*. Rubinstein's performance leaves nothing whatever to be desired: the rhythm is miraculously preserved through the subtlest of *rubato*—a scarcely perceptible hesitation before the beat; the delicacy and expressiveness of touch could not be surpassed. It will indeed be a long time before these records are superseded.

I have, unfortunately, been unable to notice the Decca issues for this month, since they did not reach me in time, but I hope to include them in the November notes.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

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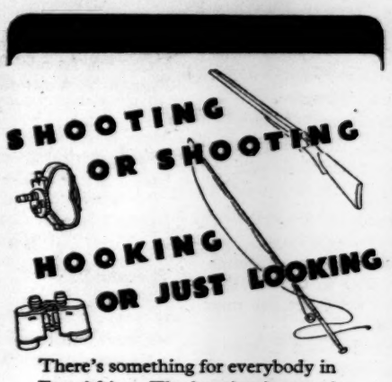

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Week-end Competitions

No. 507

Set by T. C. Worsley

The usual prizes are offered for a passage (not more than 200 words) describing a well-known picture, on the analogy of Pater's famous piece on the Mona Lisa. Entries will be judged on their own merits—rather than as imitations on parodies.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Nov. 3rd.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 505

Set by Raymond Mortimer

The usual prizes are offered for the best set of three clerihews on the names of musicians, composers or executants, living or dead.

Report by Raymond Mortimer

Writing clerihews must be one of the most pleasing methods of self-expression. Indeed it can quickly become an obsession and an epidemic. After reading hundreds, I found my brain reeling, and could hardly call "One Spade" without adding "I hope it can be made"; and when my opponent said "Redouble" she added, hissing, "Now you are in trouble!" When I went to bed I found myself inventing dialogues in which Lully reproached Lalo with being shallow, and Lalo retorted that Lully was woolly; and at last I fell asleep murmuring about Délibes: "No serious critic can call *Coppélia* or *Lakmé* a failure, although a hack may." Here is a selection of the entries that specially appealed to me, but I am sure that every individual could make a different choice. The most ingenious pun, by the way, was Little Billee's:

If Fields and Moore
Are slender "turns" and "Grace-notes" on tour
Might we call Jan Kiepura
A podgier tourer.

Allan M. Laing sent eye-rhymes, of which the brilliant best is:

Johann Sebastian Bach
Cleared his brain with spinach:
To this habit is due
Many a fugue.

The others were not quite so good, and so I have the pleasure for once of refusing to reward him. Kapp is a famous composer of clerihews, and I must quote two of his:

Said Betsy
When asked to play one of the Brahms intermezzi:
"I don't know de verg—
I blay only Berg."

Who will recall,
Say, Henry Hall
When, say, Billy Cotton
Is forgotten?

Here is a selection—there were others hardly less good.

Johann Strauss
Composed "Die Fledermaus";
But Richard wrote properer
Opera. W. R. Y.

Poor old Wagner
Was not a good bargainer.
He once sold an opera four hours long
For a song. R. L. O.

Sir Thomas Beecham
Said, "*I* can't teach 'em!
Do you think *you* could,
Wood?" "LITTLE BILLEE"

Mozart
Could never resist a tart.
In the ordinary way
He ate seven or eight a day.
E. J. EVANS

Where Sebastian Bach
Would have said "Ach!"
Dr. Blow
Merely said "Oh!" CRANMER

Our thanks to the B.B.C.
that at least we cannot see
That person
Called Sandy MacPherson.
JAN R. BELL

Sandy MacPherson
Sounds no worse on
The air
Than he did in Leicester Square.
RICHARD MASSIE

Some highbrows think small beer
Of Ave Maria,
(Gounod,
You know).
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Franz Schubert
Trug den Hut umgekehrt;
Dazu, was ist noch besser,
Frass Erbsen mit dem Messer.
E. J. EVANS

Myra Hess,
Being sceptical about success
Said "If it was dark they wouldn't be knowin'
I wasn't Harriet Cohen."
JOHN R. ALLAN

The scandal
About Handel
Is that, simply to bore us,
He went and wrote the Hallelujah Chorus. E. W. FORDHAM

The family of Goossens
Found it a nuisance
When a Goossens was born with no real
Talent for anything but the glockenspiel. V. H. PORTER

Lily
Thought it frightfully silly
When the critics' forum
Dubbed her Pons Asinorum.
HALL PALMER

Monsieur Claude Debussy
Kept on calling "Poussi—Poussi—Pououssi!"
It quite spoilt the afternoon of a faun
who was trying to sleep on his lawn. PANCIANGUIDI

Handel
Was a Hun, but not a Vandal:
The modern Goth
Is, unfortunately, both.
H. B. FORSTER

Eugene Goossens
Is never considered a nuisance;
Hence, as indicative of joy,
The expression "Oh Boy!"
MBONGO

Duke Ellington
Should not be confounded with Wellington;
Only in the latter case
Is it right to say "Your Grace."
MBONGO

Peter Warlock
Took time by the forelock
And made Antic Hay
With Cecil Gray. S. C. ROOD

Tosti,
The weather being frosty,
Thought the ice he would try,
"Good-bye."
S. MALCOLM KIRK

Mr. Roger Quilter
Asked his chemist for a filter.
He wanted to make sure
That his music was perfectly pure.
EDGAR HOLT

It is a nuisance,
Said Léon Goossens,
There are no trios by Busoni
For Eugene, self, and Sidonie.
E. B. C. THORNELT

When William Walton
Was seen spreading Radio Malt on
His bread, he explained "I'm *so* tired
After writing Façade.
NANCY JONES

Sir Henry Wood
Said he wished he could
Conduct the Shanties of the Nation
Wearing a red, white *and blue* carnation. C. F. RATHBONE

"May I trouble you,"
Said V.-W.,
"To pass the salt on
To William Walton?"
WALTER LEIGH

John Goss
Is never at a loss.
His singing is even finer
Than his heraldic china.
TOWANBUCKET

Elgar
Was anything but velgar.
Some people make the same remach
About Chaminade and Bach.
N. LEWIS

Lots of the audience
At concerts by Cortot
Go there because
They feel that they ought to.
EDWARD PAXTON

"Though there's nothin' doin'"
Said Yehudi Menuhin,
"Still I think I'll just call
At the Albert Hall." GRAGGE

When Noel Gay
Took a stroll down Lambeth way
He little guessed what new enjoyment
The "Oi" meant.
H. J. HEWSON

After proper hesitation I conclude that M. Cassel for his two sets, deserves first prize, and Anthony Butts the second.

FIRST PRIZE

Dolmetsch père
Nearly tore his hair.
The performers filled the hall
With no audience at all.

Lord Berners
Told a crowd of learners
That if they wished to compose
They should paint or write prose.

Rachmaninoff
Exclaimed to a fan—"Enough!
What affliction that I
Wrote that damned C sharp mi."

Schönberg & Co.
Must surely know
That they cannot survive
Who decompose while alive.

César Franck
Used often to thank
Vincent d'Indy
For being handy.

Cyril Scott
Like German, is not:
But Brittain
Is almost as written.
M. CASSEL

SECOND PRIZE

Farinelli
Grew inclined to a belly;
He explained: "My en-bon-point's not pristine;
No, it's thanks to the Sistine."

Massenet
Never wrote a Mass in A.
It'd have been just too bad,
If he had.

Tetrazzini
Was a regular meanie;
She shouted: "To Elba
With Melba!"
ANTHONY BUTTS

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 503

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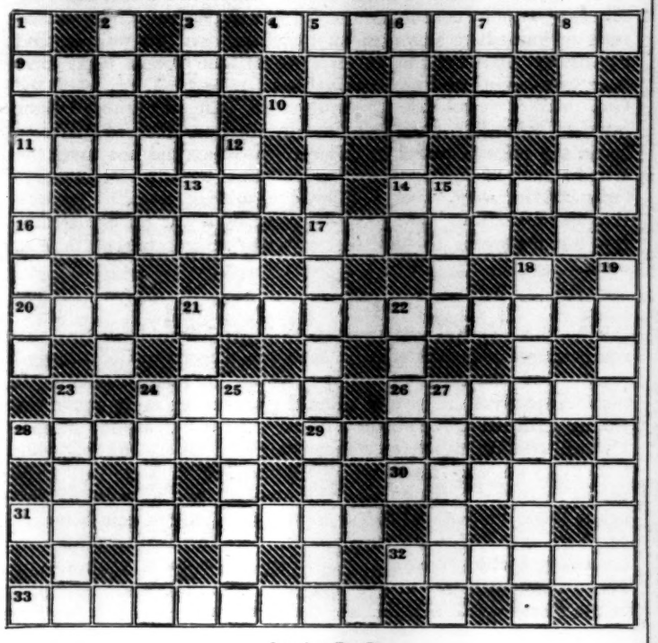


Set by L.-S.

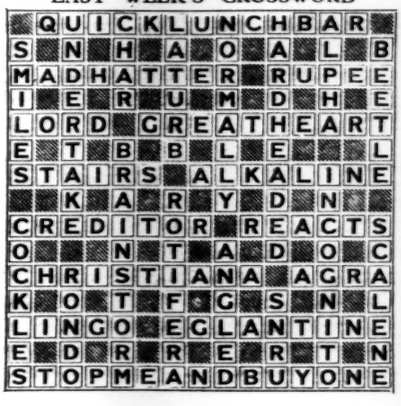
ACROSS

4. Opposite of a forward seat. (9)
9. Seven deployed and surrounded me. (6)
10. A boxing match item—for the troops. (9)
11. Come to a river. (6)
13. Gelsemium contains it. (4)
14. Some of them escape psychological trouble. (6)
16. Old Smith describes what usually happens when we get to the port. (6)
17. Put the fruit on paper so to speak. (5)
20. Voluminous beginnings. (15)
24. Mason who went back and put the lights on again. (5)
26. It belittles things in the kitchen. (6)
28. Sword of Spain. (6)
29. Gives one the shivers. (4)
30. Hush hush degree. (6)
31. You would find much rain a change in this (former) part of the world. (9)
32. Instrument that rivals George Washington. (6)
33. Result of an insect getting its tail down. (9)

DOWN

1. Many a writer has it inlaid with lead. (9)
2. Maiden nap perhaps during dull cricket. (9)
3. Do you get a glimpse of it when "you see stars"? (6)
5. Adornment for a Board Meeting? (15)
6. Sweet produced on a tug. (6)
7. Tubbed? (6)
8. Petty thing to give anyone you're fond of. (6)
12. Lord Chancellor who ended up as a college fellow. (5)
15. Look both ways. (4)
18. The opposite of ice floes? (9)
19. Suggests a starry ruler in Russia. (9)
21. Active admission. (4)
22. A rug's been chewed up by the dog. (5)
23. Musical part of education when you've a son at a public school. (6)
24. On a pouring afternoon catches the drops. (6)
25. See you are in a lost condition. (6)
27. Have your food on her return. (6)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

MR. MOORE AND THE EVILS OF E.P.T.—WHY EQUITY SHARES HAVE MISBEHAVED—THE GILT-EDGED RISE—ANGAS AND THE WAR

THERE is, of course, a lot of loose and hypocritical talk in the City about the new taxation, but what the honest business man is afraid of is that in taking the profit out of war the Government will take the profit out of business enterprise. This is not unlikely if we leave the economics of a war budget to politicians like Sir John Simon. Honest criticism of the new Excess Profits Tax came this week from Mr. Kenneth Moore, the chairman of Trinidad Petroleum Development. Mr. Moore, an accountant with expert experience of taxation problems, is clearly entitled to a hearing. I cannot support his view that one of the evils of the old E.P.D. was that the scale of taxation "rose to heights at which many ordinarily honest people failed to remain so." Really, if business men cannot resist the temptation, however strong, to steal the national revenues, we must lock them up. But Mr. Moore was not unreasonable in suggesting that where the new E.P.T. falls heavily on any company there should be a right of appeal to a suitable tribunal having powers "to do rough justice" in the matter of computing pre-war profits. In his view 1938 should be added to the pre-war "standard" years 1935–37 and an even wider choice of years should be given to companies which had suffered undue depression in these years. As it is, an old-established company which made a loss in 1935–37 would have to give up 60 per cent. of its present profits. The worst evil of the new Finance Bill, which will now remain law until next April, is that it does nothing to meet the case of businesses which were in process of development or resuscitation in the pre-war "standard" years. Thus, it retards recovery and penalises enterprise.

* * *

What Sir John Simon does not appear to realise is that he cannot pay for the war out of rising taxation but out of rising earnings. Someone at the Treasury must have told him that in time of war the national earnings would increase because prices would rise and the productive machinery of the country would be working to greater or full capacity. All he had to do, according to this advice, was (a) to double up on taxation, (b) to restrict consumption, and (c) to gather up the forced savings into semi-forced loans. But he cannot attain this result by causing an immediate slump in the non-essential trades before the war-essential trades are ready to absorb the unemployed and make good the fall in earnings, or by setting up such ridiculous price controls as deny rises in price to cover increases in such costs as freight, insurance and exchange depreciation. It seems to me a pity that Sir John did not limit the excess profits duty to the armaments industries (as under A.P.D.), and impose a straight profits tax on all businesses alike, which would not penalise progressiveness or new enterprise. It is certainly unfair that young companies like Trinidad Petroleum Development, whose oil is badly wanted for the war effort, should be heavily penalised by E.P.T. while steadily-rich companies like Imperial Tobacco, Imperial Chemical Industries or Bass should have nothing to worry about.

* * *

I have elaborated this argument because of its investment consequences. It explains why equity shares have not responded with the conventional booms to the prosecution of the war. The *Financial News* index of 30 ordinary shares, which topped 80 in August, fell to about 66 by the end of September and has so far only recovered to 74. The behaviour of British equity shares has been the reverse of the movement in American equities which rose sharply on the outbreak of war and fell back only on Major Aogas' rumours of an early armistice and the prolonged political dog-fight over the Neutrality Bill. British investors are nervous about their equity shares. They are afraid that Government interference in business, the regulation of prices and the heavy increases in taxation will take the profit out of trading, that the growing mass of Government controls will make it impossible for managements to operate efficiently. Will taxation rob the shareholders of their bread and butter dividends as well as the jam? It was significant that on account of the new taxation Birmingham Small Arms cut its dividend last week from 10 per cent. to 6 per cent, and Trinidad Leaseholds from 27½ per cent. to 15 per cent. The latter was a great shock to the oil market. Oil is an international commodity with a free market in America, and as one of the raw materials of war it should rise steadily in price as the war continues. Oil shares, therefore, were theoretically sound equity shares to buy on the outbreak of hostilities. But what happened? The bureaucracy first imposed a petrol rationing scheme—without consulting the petrol companies—which caused such an immediate slump in total consumption (the war demand not nearly offsetting the fall in civilian) that storage tanks have been overflowing and tankers unable to unload. Then, when the Gulf price of petrol rose by about 30 per cent. and tanker freight rates by over 150 per cent., the bureaucracy allowed a rise of 2*d.* in the price of petrol in this country which did not cover the actual increase in costs. If such a mess can be made of a strongly-organised industry, what will happen to less powerful trades? It is bad enough to have the dislocation of a war against Hitlerism, but fer worse to have that of a war against bureaucracy at home.

* * *

With these fearful uncertainties at home I would not buy the equity shares of British companies in the expectations of a capital profit. It is too risky. I would only buy for income—that is, if the income gives me a yield about 2 per cent. or more above the yield on British Government stocks. And in buying for income I would confine myself to companies which satisfy the following tests: (i) an easy incidence of Excess Profits Tax, i.e., good profits in 1935–7; (ii) a trade which can quickly adjust its selling prices to meet a material rise in costs; (iii) a good margin between earnings and dividends to meet the heavier taxation; (iv) an assured peacetime business. I confess it is not a venturesome policy but it will pay in the long run. Here are some examples of the shares which more or less satisfy these tests:

	Pre-war Price	Present Price	Div. %	Gross Yield %
British American Tobacco £1	4⅜	4⅜	20 net	£6 6 0*
Imperial Tobacco £1 ..	6½	5 5/32	25 net	£5 19 3*
Bass £1	6⅛	5 5/16	25 net	£6 9 9*
Spillers Deferred ..	49/6	50/-	15	£6 0 0

* Tax added back at 5/6 in the £. With 7/6 tax the dividends would be 21¼% net for Imperial Tobacco and Bass and 17¼% net for B.A.T. to return the same gross yield.

* * *

My first tip was lucky, for the gilt edged market has gone from strength to strength. Three per cent. Local Loans which were 77 when I wrote last week are now 79¼ to yield £3 15*s.* 6*d.* per cent., and if the long-term rate of interest is to fall only to 3½ per cent. there are still 7¾ points profit ahead. There is a rumour that Mr. Keynes has half convinced the Treasury of the practicability of 2½ per cent., so that a 3 per cent. rate is not impossible. There are bound to be fluctuations, but the trend of gilt-edged stocks is undoubtedly still upward. The insurance companies are only just beginning to put new money into the market—previously they have been merely "switching"—and, as far as I can ascertain, the joint stock banks have not yet appeared as buyers. Yet the jobbers are already extremely short of stock. When 3½ per cent. War Loan was marked ex dividend on Wednesday at 91¾, it jumped quickly to 92¼ on the first few purchases. There is, therefore, plenty of "kick" in the market, but so far it has only had fair weather outside.

* * *

Major Angas sends out a postcard from New York with the caption printed on the left-hand corner: "War Over—Says Angas." It should, of course, have been addressed to Herr von Ribbentrop and the other Nazi chiefs who have invested their millions outside their country. Opening it, I found an advertisement of his Digest No. 47 called "Peace Ahead—Unload." The gallant Major who wrote "The Coming War" in September, 1938—not very good investment timing if you were a day-to-day operator—apparently wired to his clients, "Unload: Expect Armistice Nose-dive." Another part of the advertisement reads: "All Angas' most accurate forecasts have always been ridiculed—to start with." I shall not attempt to ridicule it, but I shall not feel tempted to buy this digest unless I hear that Major Angas is carrying the Wall Street accounts of Messrs. Goering, Goebbels, Ribbentrop and Co. Then I would do the opposite of his advice.

Company Meeting

TRINIDAD PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT

INCIDENCE OF EXCESS PROFITS TAX

MR. KENNETH MOORE'S ADDRESS

THE Annual Ordinary General Meeting of Trinidad Petroleum Development Co., Ltd., was held on October 19th at River Plate House, Finsbury Circus, E.C.

Mr. Kenneth A. E. Moore, F.C.A. (the chairman of the company) presided.

The chairman said: Gentlemen, when I addressed you a year ago I indicated that after a period of rapid development a phase of consolidation and of planned stabilisation of output had been entered upon as a matter of policy. The results disclosed by the accounts and reports which are before you to-day reflect that phase, and the best tribute to the soundness of that policy lies in the fact that we have achieved with the minimum of expenditure the desired production of some three million barrels of oil, and have succeeded, in a year of continuous depression in crude oil prices, in maintaining our profits around the £180,000 mark. At the same time much useful work has been done during the year to lay the foundations for a further expansion of production—storage capacity has been materially increased, the light products recovery plant has been duplicated, pipelines and roads have been constructed, and the central depot has been completed and brought into use.

DRILLING ACTIVITIES

By the most careful organisation of drilling it has been possible with only four rigs in operation to achieve almost the same footage as was the case with five rigs in the previous year and, as you will have seen from the report, out of 49 wells drilled during the year, 48 are producers.

A minor but useful addition to our potential oil reserves has been made by the acquisition during the year of oil-mining leases covering about 1,000 acres.

Here, in London, in addition to normal management affairs, a matter of vital importance—namely, the contract under which our oil is sold—has engaged the attention of the board. The old contract would normally have expired in 1941. As the outcome of negotiations, the old contract has been superseded by a new contract with United British Oilfields of Trinidad, Ltd., for a period of 10 years on terms which should operate to the advantage of both companies in their respective spheres. Your directors recommend a dividend of 15 per cent.

THE EXCESS PROFITS TAX

As regards taxation, it is impossible at present to make anything but an approximate estimate of the incidence of the new Excess Profits Tax in our case. On the face of it, however, businesses which in recent years have been and still are in the development stage will be severely hit, and so far as can be seen from the Finance No. 2 Bill, which has recently been rushed through Parliament without the customary discussion, no serious attempt has been made to do rough justice in the case of young and progressive businesses or businesses which were in the process of resuscitation in pre-war years.

I think it is generally agreed that the evils associated with the old Excess Profits Duty arose principally from three fundamental causes:—

1. That many injustices and anomalies arose from the prescribed method of computation of the pre-war standard of profits whether that standard was based on profits or capital. These injustices were by no means all on the side of the taxpayer and it is common knowledge that certain industries escaped their moral liability, but on the other hand, for a variety of reasons, there were glaring discrepancies in the incidence of the duty as between individual businesses engaged in the same industry and as between various classes of industry.

2. There was introduced into industry an unhealthy element of extravagance in expenditure and disregard of control of wages and costs which gave impetus to the vicious spiral of rising prices, etc.

3. That the scale of taxation rose to heights at which many ordinarily honest people failed to remain so.

SUGGESTED SAFEGUARDS

I believe that these evils could be avoided to some extent on this occasion, or at least minimised, by the adoption of certain safeguards, including the following:—

(a) As regards the pre-war standard, that in addition to certain obvious detailed allowances for such matters as unremunerative capital, undue depression in a particular industry in the standard years, etc., there should be an overriding provision giving the right of appeal in hard cases to a suitable tribunal for some measure of rough justice in the computation of pre-war standards, unlimited in scope as is Clause 13, Section 7, in the draft Finance (No. 2) Bill, as amended.

(b) As regards undue extravagance, etc., that there should be general Government control of the level of wages and restriction of competition for labour between various classes of industry and that increases in salaries should be liable to surcharge if unwarranted. Further, that on *prima facie* evidence of wanton extravagance in administration inspired by the knowledge that it was at the cost of the Exchequer, Inspectors of Taxes should be empowered to bring the matter before a suitable tribunal with power to inflict heavy penalties. While difficult to administer, this latter provision would no doubt act as a powerful deterrent.

(c) As regards dishonesty, the best way of minimising the possible deterioration of the morals of the business community in relation to taxation is to remove any feeling that the incidence of taxation is capricious and unjust. I believe the suggestion which I have already made for the introduction of the principle of rough justice in otherwise hard cases would go a long way in this direction.

Finally, there are two specific points among others in the present Bill which, if not met, will cause endless heart-burning, discontent and injustice:—

1. To limit the pre-war standard years to 1935, 1936 and 1937 may have been all very well for the armament industry, but to retain those years for industry in general is quite indefensible. I therefore suggest that the year 1938 should be added in the case of all businesses not subject to the original armaments profits duty, and that, in addition, in the case of undue depression in any industry in the four standard years a wider choice of years—say four out of the last six pre-war years—should be at the option of the tax-payer.

2. The Bill in its present form—particularly Clause 13, Section 7—does not adequately provide for the case of businesses, whether old or new, which were in the process of development or resuscitation in pre-war years and may still be in that process. Such businesses should have the right of appeal to a special tribunal with power to do full justice to the circumstances of each case.

POSITION OF THIS COMPANY

Our company, whose business is confined to the production of oil in Trinidad, affords a concrete example. Founded in 1918, it was for many years only partially successful in winning oil. In 1937, additional capital was provided and renewed efforts were made to increase production. Those efforts are beginning to bear fruit and the production and profits of the company have recently been doubled, not as a result of the war, but simply as a result of this fresh money and fresh effort. During the war this company will no doubt be required, in the national interest and regardless, perhaps, of ordinary commercial considerations, to increase its production very materially and, as matters stand at present, it will be saddled with an entirely unrepresentative pre-war standard based on the lower production and profits of the years 1935, 1936, 1937, and a large part of its profits will be absorbed by Excess Profits Tax, quite regardless of the fact that it will be exhausting its reserves of oil and thus, perhaps, mortgaging the future.

I suggest that to meet such cases somewhere in this Bill there should be a provision, at least, that where reserves are being depleted, the pre-war standard should be increased proportionately to the increased production of oil, copper, gold, or whatever it may be, in the accounting periods as compared with the standard period.

FACTORS IN THE OUTLOOK

In present circumstances you will appreciate that it is impossible for me to give any reliable indication of the prospects for the current year, but, while we shall no doubt have to meet increased costs and taxation and difficulties and complications arising out of the war, there are at present two favourable factors—namely, that there has recently been a substantial rise in Gulf Coast export prices of crude oil products and that, as our oil is paid for in American dollars, the sterling equivalent which we receive over here has been increased by reason of the appreciation in the dollar.

The reports and accounts were unanimously adopted.